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MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM

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CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

FRENCH romanticism had essentially run its course before 1850. True, Hugo was in the fullness of creative power and was yet to live and compose for many years, always in spirit the romanticist. But Chateaubriand was all but forgotten, the passive elegiac note of Lamartine was no longer heard, Musset no longer voiced in graceful lines his personal woes; Vigny alone held attention and respect by reason of the solidity of his thought and the grandeur of his stoicism. In the society of the time, the Orleanist régime and the Second Empire, the dominant class was the materialistic bourgeois; the trend of thought was that empiric positivism which fitted well with the practical trend of the age. The esthetic soul found respiration difficult.

Théophile Gautier marks the beginning of the new movement produced by the situation. A romanticist in some technical aspects, he is, nevertheless, to be sharply distinguished from the generation of 1820. In *Mademoiselle de Maupin* and in *Emaux et Camées* he sets forth the doctrine of *l'art pour l'art*, considers beauty as its own justification, takes a long step toward impersonality in literary expression and seeks to blend poetry with the plastic arts. His work is the effort of the artist and idealist to construct the proverbial ivory tower as a refuge from a banal and sordidly practical commercialism. He is the link between romanticism and the poetic movement of the third quarter of the century, a movement to which the name of Parnassus has been given. Finally, and to conclude this hasty and grievously superficial summary, we must voice the caution not to think of these Parnassians as a school or group dominated by identical ideas and spirit. They represent a reaction against previous romanticism and against contemporary banality. The one idea that they have in common was given them by Gautier: the search for Beauty. Beauty, in fact, became for them a cult.

It is with these things in mind that we come to Baudelaire. His nature and personality present much that is perplexing to the English or American mind,—and, more particularly, to the puritanical spirit. His art is a matter of controversy among his French contemporaries. Critics such as Brunetière, Scherer, Faguet and others attack him bitterly, granting him but scant measure of literary merit. Others, whose names are no less famous,—his fellows in Parnassus, Swinburne in England, Edmond de Goncourt, Anatole France and Paul Bourget,

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are enthusiastic in their praises. Clearly some middle ground must be found between the harsh judgment of Lanson¹ and the rather sentimental and rhapsodical estimates of his latest American admirers, Lewis Shanks² and Rhodes.³ Baudelaire is an excellent illustration of Sainte-Beuve's contention that the works of an author must be studied in the light of his life experiences. The proper attitude to take is one of sympathetic understanding which shall not condone evil but which shall be full of just and appreciative pity. To pay tribute to undoubted genius does not entail approval of all the acts of the genius.

Baudelaire's start in life was unfortunate. He sprang from a marriage ill-assorted because of disparity in age. His mother, an orphan practically dependent upon the charity of friends, sought relief by marrying a man considerably more than twice her age. She was but twenty-eight when our poet was born; her husband was sixty-two. Baudelaire's father belonged in manners and thought to the rationalists of the eighteenth century; his mother was a sincere Catholic of the Jansenist type. There could have been little in common intellectually between husband and wife. The former's years certainly could not help him to meet adequately the desire for affection that a young woman would naturally feel. The mother therefore lavished upon the young Charles the love which, under normal conditions, would have been in part accorded to her mate.

When Charles was six, his father died, leaving Madame Baudelaire with scant material resources. Twenty months later she accepted the proposal of Major Aupick, a man of thirty-five, and contracted the sort of marriage which would have been best in the first place. It was the natural and sensible thing to do. But this marriage was a real tragedy to the boy Charles. He adored his mother and her action seemed to him a treason. It destroyed his faith in woman. Nor were conditions bettered by the Major's actions. The latter meant well but he did not understand Charles. The boy was bereft of affection and sought distraction in books. Unhappily there were none of juvenile nature in his father's library; instead, he read such authors as Voltaire and Rousseau and even that horrific novel, *The Monk*, by George Lewis. One may easily imagine the effect upon a suffering and highly-sensitive child.

¹"Il représente à merveille ce que j'ai déjà appelé le bas romantisme, prétentieusement brutal, macabre, immoral, artificiel, pour ahurir le bon bourgeois . . . Une originale mixture d'idéalisme ardent et de fétide sensualité se fait en cette poésie." *Hist. d. l. litt. fr.*, p. 1043

²L. P. Shanks, *Baudelaire, Flesh and Spirit*, Boston, 1930.

³S. A. Rhodes, *The Cult of Beauty in Charles Baudelaire*, Institute of French Studies, Columbia University, New York, 1929, 2 vols.

Utterly unable to fathom Charles, Major Aupick sent him away to a *pension* in Lyon when he was twelve. French boarding-schools of the time were of the military cast,—something that the Major approved. Life there was a torture. The reader of Daudet's *Le Petit Chose* will have a good idea of the atmosphere. The four years that Baudelaire spent here were decisive in his life. He found the universe hostile and assumed the defensive attitude which he retained during his entire existence. Yet he made a good record as a student and won two prizes for his Latin verse.

His return home was marked by immediate conflict. For three years his stepfather tried to get him to prepare for government service. Charles' inclinations may not have been definitely literary at this time but they certainly did not tend toward official life. He began to form friendships among folk who offered him distractions that were not wholly innocent. At eighteen he took his first mistress, a Jewess, nicknamed Louchette because of her squint. We surmise from his letters that he was acting in revenge for his lost ideal love, his mother. It was the degradation of love to a merely physiological function.

Although he was apparently successful in keeping matters secret, there was anxiety at home and a family council decided that he should be sent on a long voyage to the Indies. Baudelaire seems to have made no opposition and set sail in May of 1841. However, upon arriving at the Ile de Bourbon in the Indian Ocean, he refused to proceed and started back to Paris where he arrived the following February. This experience gave him many new ideas which are reflected in a number of his poems. During the long hours on board ship he was evidently doing much morbid thinking. The lines entitled *L'Albatros* illustrate his frame of mind:

Souvent, pour s'amuser, les hommes d'équipage
Prennent des albatros, vastes oiseaux des mers,
Qui suivent, indolents, compagnons de voyage,
Le navire glissant sur les gouffres amers.

A peine les ont-ils déposés sur les planches,
Que ces rois de l'azur, maladroits et honteux,
Laissent piteusement leurs grandes ailes blanches
Comme des avirons trainer à côté d'eux.

Ce voyageur ailé, comme il est gauche et veule!
Lui, naguère si beau, qu'il est comique et laid!
L'un agace son bec avec un brûle-gueule,
L'autre mime, en boitant, l'infirme qui volait!

Le Poète est semblable au prince des nuées
 Qui hante la tempête et se rit de l'archer;
 Exilé sur le sol au milieu des huées,
 Ses ailes de géant l'empêchent de marcher.

It is, in fact, intended to be a picture of himself. The temperamental youth essays to pose also as the dandy. Baudelaire found himself in that materialistic environment so well depicted by Augier and Dumas *fil.* He hated equally the *hommes d'affaires* and the St. Simonian socialists. The poem *Don Juan aux Enfers* shows him taking Byron as his hero and Don Juan as his ideal. He portrays the famous libertine descending into hell and confronted by the threatening shades of his many victims but viewing all passively and in proud disdain,—

Mais le calme héros, courbé sur son rapière,
 Regardait le sillage et ne daignait rien voir.

all of which is clearly representative of Baudelaire's own attitude.

About this time he came into his small inheritance of 75000 francs and his first act was to remove from the home environment and from contact with his stepfather. He took an apartment on the Isle Saint Louis and began to mingle extensively with poets and artists. Among these new acquaintances were Leconte de Lisle, Banville, Sainte-Beuve, Gautier, even Victor Hugo. His relations with Gautier were especially sympathetic and he adopted the latter's cult of beauty. In the first edition of the *Fleurs du Mal* (1857) he visions Beauty as speaking to men in that fine sonnet which begins:

Je suis belle, ô mortels! comme un rêve de pierre,

and in the *Hymne à la Beauté* (1861) he apostrophises personified Beauty in the magnificent lines:

Viens-tu du ciel profond ou sors—tu de l'abîme,
 O Beauté? Ton regard, infernal ou divin,
 Verse confusément le bienfait et le crime,
 Et l'on peut pour cela te comparer au vin.

Tu contiens dans ton oeil le couchant et l'aurore;
 Tu répands des parfums comme un soir orageux;
 Tes baisers sont un philtre et ta bouche une amphore
 Qui font le héros lâche et l'enfant courageux.

Sors-tu du gouffre noir ou descends-tu des astres?
 Le Destin charmé suit tes jupons comme un chien;
 Tu sèmes au hasard la joie et les désastres,
 Et tu gouvernes tout et ne réponds de rien.

Que tu viennes du ciel ou de l'enfer, qu'importe,
O Beauté! monstre énorme, effrayant, ingénu!
Si ton oeil, ton souris, ton pied m'ouvrent la porte
D'un infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu?

De Satan ou de Dieu, qu'importe? Ange ou Sirène,
Qu'importe, si tu rends,—fée aux yeux de velours,
Rythme, parfum, lueur, ô mon unique reine!—
L'univers moins hideux et les instants moins lourds?

These lines are fairly representative of Baudelaire's whole attitude. He seeks relief, no matter at what cost. He is like Faust who cries at the moment of decision: "Ich muss, ich muss,—und kostet es mein Leben!"

We now come to a relationship in Baudelaire's life which affected him profoundly and permanently. It resulted in his physical and moral ruin; paradoxically, it stimulated a large part of his poetical production which therefore constitutes a soul revelation, intense, vibrant and, to most people, tragically depressing. We recall that Hugo believed in the duality of human nature, in the constant struggle between the good and the evil that we have in us. Hugo claimed that this struggle eventually brings the triumph of the good. Goethe held the same view. But in Baudelaire the victory seemingly fell to the power of evil.

In 1842 he chanced to make the acquaintance of Jeanne Duval, a dancer at the *Théâtre du Panthéon*. She was seventeen, born in Santo Domingo, and had more than a trace of negro blood. There is abundant testimony as to her beauty. She fascinated Baudelaire at once, her eyes being the immediate charm for he writes:

Mon enfant a des yeux obscurs, profonds et vastes,
Comme toi, Nuit immense, éclairés comme toi!
Leurs feux sont ces penses d'Amour, mêlés de Foi,
Qui pétillent au fond, voluptueux ou chastes.

She was for him an enchantress from whom he tried to escape again and again without avail; a vampire who sapped his physical being and dominated his will. Baudelaire tells the tale himself in his *conte*, *La Fanfarlo*; there is fair reason to believe that the situation gave Daudet the basis for his novel *Sappho*. Jeanne Duval's charms were purely physical; there is nowhere any suggestion of the intellectual and certainly no hint of the neo-platonic. For her there was but one kind of love. Baudelaire reveals all phases of the situation with ghastly frankness in many poems.* He curses the enslavement,—

*cf. *Sed non Satiata* and *Le Vampire*.

. . . Infâme à qui je suis lié
 Comme le forçat à la chaîne.
 Comme au jeu le joueur têt,
 Comme à la bouteille l'ivrogne,
 Comme aux vermines la charogne,
 . . . Maudite, maudite sois-tu!⁵

They are not pretty poems, but the puritanically-minded will hardly call them an incentive to lubricity. And the rebellious struggle of the better spirit against debasement is also represented,—for example, in *Le Léthé*.

In his suffering and despair, Baudelaire confesses all to his mother who seems to have done her best to aid him in his combat with the sinister influence. At least, there are times when our poet, although not free from his obsession, nevertheless shows less gloom and more cheer. In *Le Balcon* he is evidently addressing his mother and we catch a glimpse of the adoration which he felt for her,—perhaps a hint of the effect that her remarriage had upon him. And from the very first there was also in Baudelaire's mind an urge, an impulse which contested the dominance of Jeanne and which sought to uplift. This element was his idealism, associated with that love of beauty which occasionally manifests itself in neo-platonic fashion, as, for example, in *Elévation* (1857) where we find a sweeter note:

Envole-toi bien loin de ces miasmes morbides,
 Va te purifier dans l'air supérieur,
 Et bois, comme une pure et divine liqueur,
 Le feu clair qui remplit les espaces limpides.

Jeanne Duval was, however, not the only source of distress to our poet. When he received his inheritance and set up for himself in the establishment on the Isle Saint Louis he began a life of wastefulness. Soon but little remained of his patrimony. His family applied to the authorities, with the result that the remnant of Baudelaire's fortune was placed in the hands of a trustee. He was to be allowed only the scanty income that the dwindled principal would produce. In the meantime he had amassed a large burden of debt and his creditors were harassing him. He sought a momentary and fallacious relief from the crushing anxiety and embarrassment by indulging heavily in liquor and drugs. This deceitful and mocking refuge he describes in *Le Poison* from which we cite two typical stanzas:

⁵*Le Vampire*.

Le vin sait revêtir le plus sordide bouge
D'un luxe miraculeux,
Et fait surgir plus d'un portique fabuleux
Dans l'or de sa vapeur rouge,
Comme un soleil couchant dans un ciel nébuleux.

L'opium agrandit ce qui n'a pas de bornes,
Allonge l'illimité,
Approfondit le temps, creuse la volupté,
Et de plaisirs noirs et mornes
Remplit l'âme au delà de sa capacité.

Possibly no stimulus was necessary to drive him to such means for escaping from harsh reality. But such stimulus existed in the persons of two individuals. In the American, Edgar Allen Poe, he found a kindred soul. Baudelaire translated Poe into French and thus introduced him to the French world. In fact, he improves Poe by the translation for he grasped the real spirit of the American author and rewords him in better diction. Baudelaire was also captivated by the Englishman, Thomas De Quincey, whose *Confessions of an Opium Eater* he likewise translated. His rendition gives us a full sense of the morbid fascination that the work had for him.

About 1851 he had arrived at a degree of reconciliation with his mother. In spite of all his defiance and bravado, there lurked in his conscience a conviction of sin. Baudelaire was not a bold and impudent sinner. Quite unlike those genial spirits of the eighteenth century who had fondly assured themselves of the essential goodness of human nature, he possessed a wholly Catholic and orthodox notion of original sin. This was apparently a legacy from his mother. Although he gropes in the mire, he realizes the situation, and the laments are frequent and poignant. This note is revealed in the sonnet:

Il est amer et doux, pendant les nuits d'hiver,
D'écouter près du feu qui palpite et qui fume,
Les souvenirs lointains lentement s'élever
Au bruit des carillons qui chantent dans la brume.

Bienheureuse la cloche au gosier vigoureux
Qui, malgré sa vieillesse, alerte et bien portante,
Jette fidèlement son cri religieux,
Ainsi qu'un vieux soldat qui veille sous la tente!

Moi, mon âme est fêlée, et lorsqu'en ses ennuis
Elle veut de ses chants peupler l'air froid des nuits,
Il arrive souvent que sa voix affaiblie

Semble le rôle épais d'un blessé qu'on oublie
 Au bord d'un lac de sang, sous un grand tas de morts,
 Et qui meurt, sans bouger, dans d'immenses efforts.⁶

He finally broke with Jeanne Duval in 1852, but the damage to his physical, mental and moral being was complete. He was consumed by boredom and apathy; he had the realization, so terrible to a sensitive soul, that his life was a failure and that he could never reach the ideal of perfection for which he strove. A great hatred of all things, even of his own existence, arose in his mind and is expressed in *Le Tonneau de la Haine*. His disgust at his condition and his exasperation at his inability to write led him to desire death. However, he never seems seriously to have considered suicide. This inclination toward death is voiced in *Le Mort Joyeux* in which, after a description of the grave that Villon might have penned, he addresses himself to the worms:

O vers! noirs compagnons sans oreille et sans yeux,
 Voyez venir à vous un mort libre et joyeux;
 Philosophes viveurs, fils de la pourriture,

A travers ma ruine allez donc sans remords,
 Et dites-moi s'il est encore quelque torture
 Pour ce vieux corps sans âme et mort parmi les morts?

When the first edition of *Les Fleurs du Mal* was printed in 1857 there arose an uproar. A bitter attack was launched by the Catholic reactionaries. The publisher of the collection was tried and fined, the charge being that the poems were immoral. The trouble was that the work was considered piecemeal. It is really an autobiography and when the poems are read in succession they can only inspire a hatred of vice.

We now come to the second episode of Baudelaire's life of passion. He separated from Jeanne Duval in 1852, as we have just said; any separation gives a sense of emptiness. Musset expressed the feeling in *La Nuit de Décembre*. Woman had for Baudelaire attractions both physical and intellectual. He writes in the preface to the *Paradis Artificiels*, "Woman is the being that projects the deepest shadows or the brightest lights in our dreams." His idealism sought an object for its affection and he discovered it in Mme. Sabatier. Poe had written verses to a dream-mistress and our poet imitated him, save that he concealed his identity for some five years. He was looking for a release from Jeanne's sensuality and needed a platonic love. However, Apollonic Sabatier was far from being a Beatrice. She was the same age as Baudelaire.

⁶*La Cloche Fêlée*.

laire, thirty-one, and was the mistress of the banker Mosselmann who had saved her,—perhaps the expression is ill-chosen—from the career of artists' model. Her beauty is undeniable, if we may judge from Judith Gautier's description, from Clésinger's statue of her and from Meissonnier's painting. Baudelaire apparently fell in love first with the statue. Later he made her acquaintance at Mosselmann's house, a place where celebrities met. It was eloquent of wealth and splendor; to the poet plunged in the sordidness of a dirty *pension* it must have seemed a veritable paradise.

Mme. Sabatier appeared to him as the embodiment of all that Jeanne was not. He had sent her anonymously the lines entitled *Réversibilité*, the tone of which can be gained from the concluding strophe:

Ange plein de bonheur, de joie et de lumières,
David mourant aurait demandé la santé
Aux émanations de ton corps enchanté!
Mais de toi je n'implore, ange, que tes prières,
Ange plein de bonheur, de joie et de lumières!

Her attitude toward him was gracious. One evening in May, 1853, he walked home with her and the walk inspired sweet and tender sentiments which he expresses in the poem entitled *Confession*. It is not difficult to glimpse the conflicting emotions in the hearts of these two: Madame Sabatier revolting for the moment against her own position and keenly conscious of the ephemeral nature of both beauty and charm; Baudelaire longing painfully for love of a better and sweeter quality. In the meantime he continued to write her letters, without signing his name, in which he poured forth his heart. The affair continued well into 1854 without any positive revelation on Baudelaire's part. But in June, 1855, he published three of the poems written for Mme. Sabatier in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*; no doubt by this time she was aware of the author, although she seems never to have indicated to him that she was.

Most amazingly, in the midst of this apparent trend to better things and a more wholesome attitude, Baudelaire returned to Jeanne. He explains it as an "experiment." Probably Jeanne soon guessed that she had a rival for she left him in September, 1856. The next year *Les Fleurs du Mal* appeared and there ensued at once a violent attack. Baudelaire sought the aid of Mme. Sabatier in the conflict because of her influential connections. In *Les Fleurs du Mal* he had printed a number of poems that he had written for her. He frankly avows them now and writes to her that the censors have dared to incriminate some of them. The Parisian world was as much excited over the trial as it

had been over Flaubert's difficulties with *Madame Bovary*. The attack had the obvious result of drawing more attention to Baudelaire's talent. Mme. Sabatier soon found herself the object of much quiet admiration and was duly flattered by it. It was but a fortnight later that she writes to him affectionately and came to him at this *pension*. The affair was no longer platonic; Baudelaire was sadly disillusioned, to all appearances, for, although they continued pleasant relations, he wrote no more ecstatic verses to her. By the end of 1857 she seems to have gone entirely out of his existence.

Baudelaire's letters during the autumn of this year give full evidence of deepest depression. His work had been subjected to bitter attack, he had abandoned hopes of fame, and his yearning for a spiritual love had been met with a very earthy reality. He flirted with the idea of suicide but succeeded in pulling himself together. He was utterly weary of the notoriety. In December he wrote in a letter to his mother:

What I feel is an immense discouragement, an intolerable feeling of isolation, a perpetual fear of some vague misfortune, a complete distrust of all my powers, a total absence of all desires, an impossibility of finding anything whatever to amuse me. The bizarre success of my book and the hatreds it aroused interested me for a short time, then I relapsed. I ask myself: "What is the use of all this? What is the use of that? It is the very essence of spleen."

This term, *spleen*, caught his fancy and he wrote four poems under this caption. The following concluding lines from one of them will serve to illustrate the tone:

. . . Et de longs corbillards, sans tambours ni musique,
Défilent lentement dans mon âme; l'Espoir,
Vaincu, pleure, et l'Angoisse atroce, despotique,
Sur mon crâne incliné plante son drapeau noir.

He sought comfort from his mother who was now a widow. Although she could not give him money, she could show him some of the genuine affection for which he longed. During the year 1858 he spurred himself on by the use of drugs. There are a number of poems in *Les Fleurs du Mal* that are manifestly written under the influence of opium for they reflect the visions which reveal his disordered brain. Perhaps the most striking of these is the *Rêve Parisien*.

In January 1859 he went to his mother at Honfleur on the seashore. Here the better air and separation from the torments of Paris restored his health in part. These happier and saner moments were, however, but of short duration. As he watched the ships passing out to sea there

came to him the sense that life is but a voyage. Again the melancholy mood gripped him. It was at this time that he composed his longest poem, *Le Voyage*, which he dedicated to his friend Maxime Du Camp. It is too long to quote in full, but the concluding strophes are so replete with meaning that it would indeed be a pity not to cite them:

O Mort, vieux capitaine, il est temps! levons l'ancre!
Ce pays nous ennuie, ô Mort! Appareillons!
Si le ciel et la mer sont noirs comme de l'encre,
Nos coeurs que tu connais sont remplis de rayons!

Verse-nous ton poison pour qu'il nous réconforte!
Nous voulons, tant ce feu nous brûle le cerveau,
Plonger au fond du gouffre, Enfer ou Ciel, qu'importe?
Au fond de l'Inconnu pour trouver du nouveau!

His cry was soon to be heard. On January 13, 1860, Baudelaire had his first attack of congestion of the brain. The next seven years are a time of deepening shadows. He rallied from the first stroke and even took up his pen once more to write reviews; but his whole spirit was completely broken. The creditors were continually upon him and, in order to escape them, he left Paris for Belgium in 1864. It had been suggested to him that he might give some lectures and better his fortunes. It was a most unhappy move for only a few came to hear him and the lecture tour was abandoned. Although his friends at Paris called upon him to return, he vacillated,—he glimpsed the horde of creditors. So he lingered in Brussels despite his detestation of Belgium and its people. In March, 1866, during a stay at Malines he was stricken with creeping paralysis which finally took from him the power of speech.

His friends now secured his removal to Paris. For eighteen long months he lingered in agony until the end came on August 31, 1867. In the final days he turned once more to that religious belief at which he had so often sneered but which ever secretly kept its hold upon him by virtue of inheritance.

The story that we have related is not a pretty tale; nay, on the contrary, it is often revolting. But it is incontestably powerful. As Barbey d'Aurevilly says,⁷ there is not the clear and limpid view of the Visionary of Florence but a gaze that is convulsed and agonized. There is a satanic quality which has, nevertheless, its own variety of ghastly beauty. Baudelaire represents a soul of genius grappling with the horrors of Hell. It is not difficult to feel the uncanny charm of the morbid grip us. Perhaps we pay too great a price for dallying with the thoughts of evil;

⁷*Poésie et Poètes*, p. 107.

a secret malady may come from the poison in these *Fleurs du Mal*. Yet there is power, there is beauty of its kind and there is undeniably great genius. It is all a part of that complex and wonderful mystery, human creative expression.

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THE WAY OF THE TRANSLATOR

THE study of what we know today as either languages or literatures has become so specialized that various sub-titles are assigned to the individuals who work in what was formerly looked upon as a single field. None of these titles is less inviting than that of translator. His is a task that is weakly rewarded in money and enjoys but little grace spiritually. Chrestomathies are full of *mots* touching on the translator's ill-favored occupation, ranging all the way from Goethe's palpable exaggeration to the effect that he who knows no other language than his own knows nothing about his own down to that bit of Italian extravagance embedded in the couplet, *Traduttore traditore*.

The shallow make-up of this latter phrase may be indicated from a parallel out of my own life. I was reviewing, a few years back, a novel for the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, the heroine of which, a lovely but somewhat flirtatious woman, was surprised by her husband in an embarrassing situation. She neither swooned nor denied; she merely smiled. I wrote that "though chagrined, she grinned." It was a shoddy expression but since it had come to me unconsciously I allowed it to stand. The Italian doublet may have no better origin. There is nothing in any way treacherous about a translator. There may be times when we cannot catch the *Wortseele*; there is never a time when he cannot catch the *Wortleib*. Anyhow the real *Seele* has to be supplied by the reader himself.

Since the depression has brought with it a painful lull in translations, and since Professor Rudolph Altrocchi has written with such suggestiveness about translations in the May 1934 issue of the *Modern Language Forum*, I wish to bring the subject up again, more as an empiricist than as an absolutist.

English is a lazy man's language. It is just about inflectionless, almost in truth as much so as that latest and youngest of the nine Germanic languages, Afrikaans, which inflects *to be* in the present after the pattern, *I is, You is, He is, We is, You is, They is*. English has a word order that is irreducibly accommodating. It is made up of all other languages; there are only three words under *V* that are of real English origin: *vane, vat, vixen*. Its spelling is the world's worst. It is taught by every conceivable method, some of which must be wrong. Its pronunciation is largely what you prefer. It is a colonial language in the purest sense. It adapts itself therefore well to translation, while its own literature greatly needs the invigorating variety that comes from languages that have a totally different because more homogeneous past.

If however we wish to derive the full benefit from translations, such as is enjoyed by the two leading translating countries in the world, Germany and Denmark, we will have to change our attitude toward the entire problem. Mr. Altrocchi writes of the scholarship that is necessary. Quite so, but on the basis of 100, at least 60 percent should go to a knowledge of the native language and 40 percent to the foreign language if the work in question is a critical or scholarly one; about 70 percent of the needed scholarship should go to the native language and the remaining 30 percent to the foreign language if the work translated is a piece of fiction, say a novel. The meaning of a dark word or phrase or sentence can be asked from a colleague who knows, but you cannot ask style.

In this country the reverse is all-too-frequently regarded as the right principle. If our publishers wish to have, say, a Swedish book translated they cast about for someone who came, directly or otherwise, from Sweden. The results are not always bad; sometimes however they are. It is all of a piece with the student who comes to the professor of German and says, "I want to take German. My grandmother was a German and I think it should come easy to me." Blood has nothing in the world to do with it. If it did we could let all our Professors of English out and appoint the barbers and bakers of the community in their places, for less money. One of the least satisfactory students I have had at West Virginia University was a personable young lad direct from the *Reifeprüfung* of a noted *gymnasium* in Cologne. He had a *wat-det* pronunciation, a Riparian outlook, and despite his inferior achievement insisted to the end that only a German could really understand such a thoroughly German work as *Faust*.

The *understanding* of languages and literatures is a quite peculiar affair. Translations help a little along this line. It is a thousand pities that we cannot have more of them. They make for cosmopolitanism, intelligence, tolerance. Each of the forty-five poetic translations of *Faust* in the British Museum is, after all, right.

Translations, of fiction at least, however should not be reviewed by those who are familiar with the original. Fancy one who knows *Du bist wie eine Blume* caring for "Thou art so like a flower!" The words *Blume* and *flower* come, to be sure, from the same parent stem but there is a world of difference between the effect of the *ow* sound and the *u* sound; the former fits a sunflower, the latter a violet.

With all the translations we already have of *Faust*, it remains, in the best judgment I have and I can follow no other, a fact that Bayard Taylor's, while not the most accurate, is the best. It reads well. It does

not read like a translation. But it does everything to me except please me. In places it actually hurts me. I have read Goethe's *Faust* in the original a great number of times; I am familiar with it. I love what we might even call its phraseology. So don't come to me with a translation of *Faust*. But I like Charles Eliot Norton's translation of the *Divine Comedy*. Strictly and honestly speaking I don't know a word of Italian. Translations from the Russian have been well received in this country, partly because so few are familiar with the original.

There is space here for only a few phases of the significance and peculiarity, the ease, hardship and general value of a translation, especially from German into English. There is not a shadow of doubt but that it is much easier to translate English poetry into German than it is to reverse the process, if for no other reason because of German's open syllables, feminine endings, and unsurpassed genius at forming compounds. Even English *love* stops with a thud; *Liebe* is a more intriguing word and one that admits of suppler adaptation to a given rhyme scheme. The trouble lies with our *classroom* translations. But inept though they be, they remain one of the most expeditious ways we have to find out whether the student can actually read German and understand it without translating it. Fancy however for a moment the difficulties offered the linguistically inarticulate student by such simple terms as *einst*, *bis auf*, *wohl*, or *einstellen*, rhemes which may mean wholly opposed things. Or take *erst*. The student learns, he even sees without learning, that the word means *first*. Then he reads: "*Er kam erst spät nach Hause.*" He simply does not like to render *erst* by *not until*. Nor does this literal-mindedness stop with the student. There are professors too who arch the supercilia at what looks like looseness if it is a trifle hard to find the original in the translation.

One of the chief difficulties with translations from the German is, of course, the word order. The layman has no way of even suspecting the bewilderment this causes. He submits a German sentence and is disappointed to see you hesitate; he wants it done precipitately and can see no reason for delay. Suppose however the sentence runs, in a word-for-word translation, somewhat as follows: *The on the side of the hill standing, by my father, who fought in the war of 1870-71, built but yet in good condition and by me now occupied house.* As anyone with a measure of experience knows this is not an unusual type. The rendering of it, into publication as opposed to classroom translation, takes time. Nor is there any reason for the insistence on the part of non-Germans that the Germans should not write that way. Other peoples have done the same. There is a certain well-known Latin writer

who once remarked: *Bonus dormitat Homerus*. Why that word order? Why not *Bonus Homerus dormitat*? Why does the German write *Das zur Kühlung dienende Eis*? Why does he not say, *Das Eis, das dient zur Kühlung*? All such questions are futile. Latins are Latins, Germans are Germans, and it is the business of the translator to transfer their ideas. His is not to reason why, his is but to dare and try.

Having already translated not a little myself (many separate articles and six full books) a few words of hitherto unpublished autobiography with a cautious measure of exegetic comment may be in place. The most amusing experience I have ever had was with a West Virginia coal operator. This State has mined over three billion tons of coal. The genial and well-meaning operator, himself a university graduate twice over, received a book of nearly 700 pages on mining from Germany, written in German. He was a good friend of mine and still is. He asked me to translate the book for him. The social relations were so close that there could be no thought of my demanding an honorarium. I indicated that it would be a very big undertaking. Said he: "Oh I don't want you to do the spade work. You just come to the office in odd hours and dictate it to my stenographer."

It would have taken me one full day to do the first page: I am not a miner and am wholly unfamiliar with mining nomenclature. It would have taken a full year to do the whole book. So far as I know, the work has never been translated. The case symbolizes the attitude of the general public toward the translator; his work is regarded as being about on a par with knitting. If well done, a good translation is an act of real creation.

On so vital an issue however there will always be a bannered army of ever-dissenting critics. Chapman translated Homer and when Keats looked into it he discovered a new world. Matthew Arnold looked into it and found it rather bad; too idiomatic, that is, too highly vernacularized, and too phantastic. The translator re-creates, and if his output fails to provide all men with recreation it may be owing merely to the fact that men's minds work differently.

The first job of the translator is generally a matter of completely revising the original as to parts, chapters, sections, paragraphs, and sentences. Then he must arrange or budget his time. The sole way to translate a novel is to do it rapidly; the sole way to translate a scientific book is to do it slowly. We have again a reminder of Lafcadio Hearn's immortal statement about the difference between journalism and literature: the one cannot wait, the other must. My own experience leads me to believe that to drag out the translation of a novel is to ruin the trans-

lation. The critical work however must be done slowly, otherwise it is almost sure to be done sleazily. I found, in the case of Wassermann, that I did better work when I translated eight thousand words a day than if I translated four.

Translating saves, to mention only one of its many virtues, a great deal of time. The actually damning feature of scholarship, real and alleged, is *Aftergelehrsamkeit*. To do a scholarly bit of work it is frequently necessary to say so many things that have already been said so many times before. Twenty-five years ago, by way of illustration, I was impressed by Immermann's use of compounds. I greatly suspect too that some of the compounds used in connection with *Tulifantchen*, and Niniana in *Merlin*, such as "*Regenbogenglanzumwoben*" have found their way into Gerhart Hauptmann's *Versunkene Glocke* with its "*Regelreigenflüstertanz*". It is a good theme. But what is the first thing we always do in this sort of situation? Reach for the *Hilfsmittel*. There is Hirt's *Handbuch des Urgermanischen*, a more spirited work, incidentally, than Loewe's two volumes entitled *Germanische Sprachwissenschaft*. Hirt divides compounds (Vol. 2, pp. 117-130) into six classes, symbolized by the following words: *dreizehn*, *Dickkopf*, *Liebhaver*, *Menelaos*, *Neustadt*, and *Vaterland*. And the germ of my poor article is preempted! The heart of what I had in mind is weakened! The most I can do is to elaborate, expand, give examples, repeat. I could only prove, what the publisher rarely understands, that if a 300-page German book is to be translated into English, it will make in English about 315 pages, for it translates up, owing to compounds. *Tierschutzverein* has only 16 letters; *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals* has 41.¹

Hirt has furnished us with the blue-prints; we can carry out the plans and in that way carry on. With some notable exceptions, Europe has been furnishing us with the blue-prints for two centuries.

For this reason, there are still a number of translations that should be done, these two among others: A part-by-part prose translation of the whole of *Faust*, and a sound rendering of Max J. Wolff's *Heine* (Munich, Beck, 1922, 657 large pages).

Take the case of the latter work. In the first place, the English-language reader has nothing even remotely approaching an adequate life of Heine. The ones we have are either woefully lacking in exhaustiveness, or equally lacking in breadth of view, wholeness, completeness,

¹The words in the first 15 verses of the 11th chapter of Matthew run as follows: Latin 201, Gothic 209, Greek 223, German 303, English 310.

thoroughness, fairness. They tell of Heine the lyric writer, with special emphasis on worn favorites, relate some anecdotes about him which can rarely be verified, quote enough of what the campus to-day elegantly refers to as his "dirty cracks", and come up with the startling observation that that man Heine was a wonder.

As matters stand in 1935 anyone who writes even a fairly studious life of Heine will be given credit by his colleagues for this, that, and the other, including the having of a good mind. But what will he have to do? Spend months, even years, in studying—well, first, Heine himself. This done he will come to his own conclusions: some of these will be correct. Others will be incorrect; others will be controversial. Then he must study a formidable list of *Hilfsmittel*. There are Strodtmann and Elster, Boelsche and Bartels, Marcuse and—but we cannot name all the others; they are legion. Who hasn't written about Heine? Max J. Wolff however has already furnished us with the blue-prints, and a vast deal of the building material.

A translation of this study into English would really be a *contribution to scholarship* as this revolves roughly about comparative literature and international politics. But until we make an about-face such jobs must be left undone. They will probably be left undone forever. Although we refuse to have anything to do politically with *the* League of Nations this country is made up, nationally, of *a* league of nations: every known language that ranks above a jungle dialect is represented in the citizenry of the United States. We prefer however English. It is the world's greatest language, partly because it is itself a compound of all other languages. We greatly need in this country the thoughts of other peoples as well as their words.

The way of the translator is hard.

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THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM SPAIN¹

THE story has been told many times, but never more humanely and intelligently than by this Rumanian essayist. For those familiar with the history of the period, it tastes like old wine properly served in a modern, thin and transparent glass. No new facts are brought forth, but there is selection and treatment. Of the two chief manners of writing history, the pedantic, saying everything without revealing much, and the intellectually honest, saying just enough to reveal the maximum, this book belongs decidedly to the second. In 181 large-typed and well printed and spaced pages which are a credit to the publisher's art, we are offered not merely a moving narrative of the dramatic events before, in and after the expulsion, but what is more valuable, a keen insight into the ancient and ever recurring conflict between Judaism and the western world.

Valeriu Marcu begins with five precise and telling essays on the situation of the Jews previous to the establishment of the Inquisition: the inroads of scholasticism into Jewish orthodoxy; the zeal of the pious renegades (Jews converted to Catholicism) who even more than the Christians poured intolerance into the mediaeval disputations in order to entrench themselves in their newly acquired faith; the rise of the power of the Jewries, a veritable third state controlling the economic life of the nation and protected by the kings as their sure sources of income; the hostility of the Spanish towns to this shrewd and efficient people; the masses of Jews living segregated in a strange land, kept hermetic to outside spiritual influences by rabbis bent on administering souls as their own personal tutelage; the ardor of the missionaries who finally succeeded in leading large numbers—about 700,000—to the Church of Rome, and through intermarriage, to a footing of social equality with the nobility of Spain; the feigned conversions so common among Jews since the Moslem rule; the arrogance and self-confidence; and inevitably the economic antagonism of the Spaniards who felt cheated in their purses and their faith—for the *conversos*, later called deprecatorily *marranos*, not only kept their old preeminent position in the business and professional occupations, but conquered new dignities in the church and the government creating an unbearable competition. Thus, the Inquisition was taking shape in the minds of the Spaniards long before it came to be.

In spite of centuries of peaceful association with the Jews—in no

¹By Valeriu Marcu. Translated from the German by Moray Firth. New York, The Viking Press, 1935. 181 pp.

place in Europe did they reach such prosperous status as in Spain, being occasionally hated but never despised as elsewhere—there were deep seeds of strife that would have to shoot forth as soon as Spain attained her full national size. The author treats these divergencies of views, of vital attitudes, impossible of reconciliation.

The Jews, after the collapse of their nation during the Roman Empire, cut off their moorings from east and west, forsook all aspirations of glory, all curiosity for new spiritual paths, saw the remnants of their fighting spirit converted into a mechanism of heroic but passive defense. "They were to be found everywhere in the world but of the world they took no notice." Judaism was born through self-inhibition, in the bitter-sweet broodings of exile, and the Talmud was the monument erected to this purely mental and ethical realm the Jews created for themselves. "As a death mask reproduces a face, so did the Talmud reproduce the mind and form of the Jews." And paradoxically as it might seem, but not so much so when one inquires into the morbid psychology of self-denial, unprotected and persecuted as they were, they worshipped a God forbidding and austere, and they listened to rabbis that had no consolation to offer, except knowledge—the least consoling attribute of man. On the other hand the Church of Rome—main defender of the Jews on principles of "practical tolerance"—maintained a tradition of compassion. The Catholic priest offered solution to individual problems, while the Jewish rabbi thought in terms of communities and the Law.

There is truth in all these points that Marcu makes to strengthen his argument. One suspects, however, that he has over-emphasized them in his desire to compensate his sympathies towards the Jews with negative ballast, and thus present a more neutral front to the reader. Rabbis there may have been in some Spanish communities keeping the sheep in tight enclosures. Such policy may be called short-sighted five centuries afterwards, or may also be called, under the circumstances, *good guardianship*, for it might have been the only possible defense of the Jewries against the wolves that strove to disrupt them. But Marcu's dictum against the rabbis loses much of its validity when one considers the lay organization of the Spanish Jewries, where the rabbi did not play by any means a leading role. It is probably legitimate to speak of the hermetism of the Jews or of their dispersive traits, to accentuate their inability to become a part of the strong national spirit that was emerging; but it is rather arbitrary to conclude that the Jews "took no notice" of the world around because they did not write historical narratives of the contemporary scene. To begin with, history in the Middle

Ages was the sphere of royal chroniclers or monks. And the statement becomes more arbitrary in reference to Spain. There the Jews were settled before Christ. They considered the Peninsula as their second Zion. They entered in practically all activities. They were wealthy merchants, trusted diplomats, administrators of the funds of the State and the nobility, leading scholars and professional men. They fought side by side with the Spaniards against common enemies. A large body of literature and a long list of distinguished names of that period, called by the Jews themselves "High Noon in Spain," stands to contradict Valeriu Marcu. Finally, when the author contrasts the Jewish rabbi and the Catholic priest, adjudging the latter a more practical approach to individual problems, a more forgiving attitude, he is very likely right. Austerity and knowledge among the Jews have been for them a necessary refuge, a unifying tonic—why not a consolation?—against the unfriendliness without. But to deny the Jews attributes of mercy is historically unsound when one looks to their great theme of compassion, *midat ha-rahamim*. (See G. F. Moore's *Judaism*, Cambridge, U.S.A., 1927. Mr. Moore is considered by the Jews themselves as the greatest modern non-Jewish scholar on their religion.)

To the fundamental theological differences,—Marcu maintains—Spain added other obstacles for peace. The Church in Spain declared itself practically independent from the universality of Rome. It was a militant institution that tended to coordinate with the national problems. After extending the benefits of conversion, Spain saw in her midst thousands of lip-converts who constituted a peril for the national unity wrought with so much blood and effort. These converts presented to her a problem she had never met before. The bonds of a common religion did not assimilate the Jews. For the Spain of the time, the problem was a serious one. If the converts were expelled, it would be an admission of the inefficacy of grace; if they were tolerated, it would be a mortal sin against her true Catholicism. Because the very life of these *conversos* revealed to the typical Spaniard that they were different, even after two or three generations of baptism. Marcu says with acumen: "At the beginning of the Inquisition the Jews dominated the Spanish economy, and it was just their economic strength which invested them with an alien odour. For the decisive factor is not economic activity itself but a man's attitude to it, and the inward attitude to the goods of this world separated the *marranos* from the Catholics in practical life no less than in the Cathedral." The Jewish conception of property was more formal, exacting and realistic than the Spanish. Likewise that of chastity and marriage. Sincerity and honor had a different spelling for Spaniard and Jew. For a rabbi gold meant safety; for a

Spanish soldier it meant display and adventure. Usury was considered sinful by the Catholics and in letting the Jews dominate in money matters their hostility increased upon seeing that "those which everybody hated held in their hands that which everybody coveted." The trouble with religion in all times, as President Tyler Dennett of Williams College has recently pointed out, is that "it has rarely succeeded in separating hatred of sin from hatred of the sinner."

In the center of this propitious stage there rose Torquemada, one of those fanatics whose strength derived from personal incorruptibility and fervor: an irresistible spur in the confessional for the fervorous and incorruptible Isabella; and the Machiavellian Father Barberisse who won the acquiescence of Ferdinand, covetous of wealth, not so much for private motives as Marcu suggests, as for the royal one of securing the means for his ambitious European politics; and Cardinal Mendoza, wise and worldly, an effectual vehicle for launching the Inquisition.

The Catholic Kings used the Inquisition as an instrument of super-authority to harness the forces of the nation. It was a tribunal to which, because of its religious character, all had to submit. Marcu describes those first years of the Inquisition with candor and veracity, giving an impartial account of its hypocrisy and its abuses, of its knavish methods and avaricious objectives, of the exploitation of popular feeling in devious ways by the inquisitors, and lastly of the Decree of Granada, on March 31st, 1492, expelling the Jews—their penalties, the ruinous liquidation of their belongings, the wave of piety that engulfed the proscribed, wailing in their cemeteries, listening to the voice of the Prophets and contemplating themselves once more as the Chosen People; the dangers at sea in hostile ships without a place to land; their dispersion in Turkey, Italy, Holland and other countries in Europe, eventually reaching the New World where they were to do in the next centuries "important pioneer work."

Marcu closes his study with a recapitulation of the effect of the Inquisition on Spain. He opines that the dreaded tribunal did not debase the Spaniards, that it represented a source of judicial authority, acting energetically in the first twenty years, then relapsing into a threatening device. "In time the Inquisition became the most humane tribunal on the continent . . . its thunderbolts were hurled, for lack of Jews, at individual personalities before whom the ordinary courts were powerless." Perhaps this view is too kind, but it is at least free from the topical hysterics. His rather far-flung theory is that Spain chose power instead of material prosperity. Such idea might prove encouraging to the Aryan demigods, were it not for the fact that economy is nowadays more

closely connected than before with the development of a truly powerful nation. The Jews and *Moriscos*, the laboring and middle classes, took away with them, besides economic stability, a considerable nucleus of population very much needed in the immense lands of the Crown. Their places were occupied by bands of itinerant adventurers from Italy and Central Europe who drained Spain of the wealth brought from America, giving her nothing in return. The Empire became something like a vigorous athlete without nourishment: a nation of proud nobles, anachronic in a fast-shaping commercial and industrial age. Spain never abandoned the sword for the sedentary life and the commercial draft, and had to succumb.

The book, of which we have given a rather free and interpretative account, is terse, well built, unencumbered by dates and minor details. At times, however, a more specific chronology and mention of texts and authors would have been helpful. Another breach of usefulness is not to have provided a publication of this kind with a workable index. Repetitions are few and always justified by the dialectical exigencies of the twelve separate essays that form the volume. Although mostly speculative and critical, the author singles out exemplary facts to strengthen the effect of his views. The trouble with the procedure, artistically sound as it may be, is that other equally legitimate facts might be presented that could somewhat disinflate the argumentative balloon.

Admitting in general the soundness of Marcu's discussion, a few critical remarks will be pertinent. He does not seem to grasp the difference in governmental policies between the Catholic Kings and the succeeding Austrias, though this be only deduced from a single passage that does not materially affect the theme. Good logician that the author is, he incurs in a flagrant contradiction. After establishing as a premise that the conflict between Jews and Spaniards was due to divergent types of mind and practical attitudes towards life, he then devotes a chapter to emphasize "the struggle for purity of blood" as the chief aim of the Inquisition. How is this to be reconciled with the free intermarriage of Spaniards and Indians in the New World, encouraged alike by missionaries and secular authorities as the best weapon for colonization? Was not the attitude of the *informantes* of the orders of chivalry more lenient in the case of mixed blood of other origins than Jewish or Moorish? As a matter of fact, it seems, the more one becomes acquainted with this period, that the "purity of blood" was taken up as a *pretext* to subdue the religiously distrusted Jewish converts, for long suspected of friendly relations with the Mohammedans who were now rising to power in the

Mediterranean. It was part of the movement towards unity—one scepter, one cross, one sword—which animates the Spanish Empire from its very inception and which culminates in the famous speech of Charles V on Easter of 1536 before Pope Paul I, his cardinals and ambassadors, making a fiery challenge to the “infidel” Francis I together with a vigorous plea for the religious unification of the western world.

Empires always tend to purify themselves. It is a phenomenon of the gradual swelling upward of the ruling consciousness, demanding homogeneity of substance and purpose. The rise of “100 percentism” in America goes along with the rise of this country to empirehood. Spain in the 15th and 16th centuries used a relatively high-quality cleanser for her imperial garments: religion. Contrary to the opinion of ex-governor Alfred E. Smith, who in a speech in New York not long ago established a parallel between Spain and Germany, the case is quite different. The Spanish expulsion was not motivated by racial hatred and discrimination. Spain was simply primed for an imperial synthesis, loath to admit dissenters. The Jews were asked to embrace Catholicism and many chose to do so—many more than Marcu would make us believe did. If the non-conformists to this imperial dictum of unity had been a group of Aryans, German or British living under the Spanish rule, their fate would have been exactly the same. As a matter of fact, all heretics, including Spaniards of distinction, were given no alternative than Catholicism, exile or fire.

Spain demonstrated in her treatment of the American Indians, Africans, Malays, and other so-called *colored* or even more uncharitably *inferior races*, that she was universal and all-inclusive in the sense that Rome and Arabia, the other two great human empires—the Mediterranean leaven!—had been universal. Spain in her mastering days felt so great, so sure of herself, that she could not be afraid of losing her identity in the identities of others. She poured her blood in foreign veins as the wine-makers pour the *solera* in the new vintages: to make her own brand. All children were welcome to the fold if they accepted the imperial authority. Historic circumstances had made the Spanish rule religious in nature and religious acquiescence was enforced. Germany, a rising empire, still laboring under atavistic inferiority complexes, cleanses herself in blood. Spain was more human and lofty. Someone could say, even more human than England or the United States, for the measure of her empire was neither ethnocentric nor economic. It was spiritual, ideal, even if erroneous. At no time during the empire did Spain close her doors to outsiders, except on religious grounds. Furthermore, assuming fully the religious duties that were an integral part

of her very self, she fought sterile wars in defense of Rome and became the refuge of Irishmen and other persecuted Catholics in Europe.

With all this in view the misleading quotation from Leopold Ranke: "In no country have the prejudices concerning a distinction between pure and impure blood become so firmly implanted as in Spain . . . etc.," which Valeriu Marcu places in the frontispiece of his book, is out of focus in the perspective of historical facts.

A book on the Jews and in German would put the reader on his guard. It is well to state that the German text was issued last year in Amsterdam by what sounds like a Spanish-Jewish publishing house. The author shows extraordinary sympathy for the Jews—more than for the Spaniards—but he does not minimize their defects. He neither absolves nor condemns. He rationalizes and tries to explain. The Church of Rome, as distinct from the Church of Spain, fares well in his hands. In spite of being now and then caught off guard by the very force of his ideas, Marcu is, on the whole, judicial, sober, not swayed by sentimentality or partisanship. This is precisely the most arresting quality of his work: a tone of intellectual equanimity, deep compassion and tolerance for mankind. We are given an admission ticket to a back row, high up in the amphitheater to see in a sitting, from a vantage point of objectivity, not bothered by too close a view of the make-up of the actors, the staging of a mighty tragedy.

And the Spanish-born spectator thinks of the Spanish Jews still speaking the language of Castile, still reciting the classic national ballads in Amsterdam, New York and Salonika, aristocrats within their race, preserving the consciousness of a Spanish past to which they contributed so abundantly when they lived happily in the "oldest, safest and greatest Jewish centre in Europe." He thinks of the efforts made in the last twenty-five years, especially since the war, by a group of enlightened intellectuals with the support of the Spanish government, to bring back the Sephardites. He forgets the historical facts dimmed in eventualities of time and space, and wants to see in this "Spanish gesture" one more proof of that Christianity which is the inherent trait of a much maligned country.

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GOBINEAU AND ROUSSEAU

THERE has been much interest in recent years in the racial philosophy of the versatile French diplomat Joseph Arthur, Count de Gobineau, as expressed in the *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, whose influence is seen not only in the works of the Pan-Germanic propagandist Houston Stewart Chamberlain, but in the Aryan philosophy of Adolf Hitler and his Party. This growing interest has also led to a greater appreciation of the literary works of Gobineau, whose *Renaissance* has been translated into many languages. In fact he is now a recognized master of the *nouvelle*. Acquaintance with the eighteenth century *philosophe* Jean Jacques Rousseau may be assumed.

Despite the marked contrast in their respective philosophies of history, Gobineau and Rousseau challenge a comparison. They both stood for a kind of individualism, both were anti-intellectual and lovers of nature and simplicity, distrusting urban civilization. Gobineau's individualism should, of course, be distinguished from that of Rousseau.

It is curious that Rousseau and Gobineau should have successively inhabited the Château de Trye near Gisors in Normandy. Rousseau wrote a part of his *Confessions* there; he was at that time visiting the Conti family. Count de Gobineau acquired this castle in the year 1857. He lived there at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and was then *Conseiller Général* for Chaumont en Vexin.

Maurice Lange in his *Critical and Biographical Study of Count de Gobineau* accuses him of being a veritable anarchist and of carrying to greater extremes than any other writer the individualism made fashionable by Jean Jacques Rousseau. One cannot but take exception to the expression "anarchic individualism," because it does not properly apply to either Gobineau or Rousseau. Baron Seillière likens Gobineau's idealization of the Aryan to Rousseau's man of nature. While this is an interesting comparison and not entirely unjustified, one ought to remember that Gobineau's pessimistic dictum "l'homme l'animal méchant par excellence" included the Aryan.

Both Gobineau and Rousseau were, though for different reasons, dissatisfied with the conditions obtaining at the time they lived. Both were given to idealizing earlier ages. Both were strong individualists and eternally preoccupied with the problem of the right relation of the individual to the state. Rousseau, as a man of the people, was for equality; he was optimistic and a believer in progress, attaching great importance to environment and putting his faith in education. Gobineau, who was of the nobility, defended an aristocratic viewpoint. He be-

longed, moreover, to the mystic school of pessimistic historians, who believe that humanity has been degenerating ever since its existence on earth. According to Gobineau the ethnic question dominates all other problems in history. The destiny of a nation is to be explained by the inequality of the races composing it. Environment and education are of relatively little consequence.

Gobineau's romantic retrospection did not prevent him from being a traditionalist in his interpretation of history and ardent in his defense of discipline. He accepted the modern state as he did Christianity from a spirit of compromise dictated by his sense for history. Hostile as he was to Christian ethics he called himself a "bon catholique" and defended the Roman Catholic tradition. He considered a monarchical form of government best adapted to the French. The British Constitution was Gobineau's ideal for modern times, but he considered this inimitable by peoples of such heterogeneous racial composition as the French and the Germans. He looked back with a certain nostalgia to the relatively unrestrained individualism of the Germanic freeman of an earlier and more primitive age and was frank in his admiration of the Middle Ages and the knights, who so jealously guarded their *droit personnel* which was in his opinion an Aryan concept.

With this historical perspective one should contrast Rousseau's *Contrat Social*, which seeks by means of ingenious arguments to prove that all government is based on the consent of the governed, direct or implied. This, for all its flaws, is a work of logic.

In all his works Gobineau seems intent upon counteracting the rationalism of eighteenth century thinkers and their abstract notion of man. Everywhere he emphasizes inequality. His *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* seeks to prove the superiority of the Aryan race. Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* embodies a very different purpose.

In his historical outlook Jean Jacques Rousseau is the very antithesis of Gobineau. While Rousseau had a share in preparing the public for the revolution of 1789, Gobineau was prevented only by his sense for historical reality from joining the champions of the counter-revolution. Clearly he stands in strong contrast to Rousseau the Protestant and democratic leveller, the enemy of tradition and discipline, who proclaimed the goodness of the common man and the importance and moral independence of every individual regardless of race. Gobineau considered humanity to be destined to a shameful decadence through the inevitable excess of racial mixture and he resigned himself to democracy, the result of racial fusion, because he believed it irremediable.

In another important respect did the two men differ. Gobineau felt at home and shone in society and at court; he was a brilliant conversationalist. Rousseau, on the other hand, more or less lived his theory of the "homme de la nature." He was a plebeian and felt out of place in urbane society. This, in fact, partly explains his exaggerated individualism.

Gobineau's attitude is explained by the fact that he belonged to the defeated nobility in a democratic age. His mentality is comparable to that of Baudelaire, Barbey d'Aurevilly and Villiers de l'Isle Adam. In a sense they are all the intellectual descendants of Alfred de Vigny and Chateaubriand. The following quotation is psychologically interesting and very characteristic of Gobineau. It occurs in *Le voyage à Terre-Neuve* at the end of a laudatory description of certain sturdy and independent English fishermen: "Des individualités pareilles deviennent de plus en plus rares dans les temps modernes où le faible dominant possède et emploie tous les moyens d'écraser le fort au berceau."

It is an interesting fact that the distrust of urban civilization, which characterized Rousseau, should be equally pronounced in Gobineau, who differed from him in so many respects. The two resemble each other in their anti-intellectualism and love of simplicity. Gobineau called himself "l'ennemi personnel des grandes villes." There is a superficial resemblance between certain passages in Rousseau's *Discours sur les arts et sciences* and some passages in a letter of Gobineau's to Alexis de Tocqueville, where he discusses Persian politeness. Both are, in a sense, attacking civilization. I quote Gobineau: "Remplacer toute la moralité privée par des procédés, permettre la cruauté, pourvu qu'elle ne soit accompagnée de signes de passion, tolérer tout à condition que ce tout souvent ignoble, parfois odieux, s'enveloppera sous des apparences souriantes et placides, je vous avoue que je là le dernier mot de ce qu'on appelle la civilisation." And Rousseau complained that moderns cultivated "toutes les apparences des vertus sans en avoir aucune."

The resemblance is, nevertheless, superficial, for while Rousseau is concerned with the bad effects of a certain environment, Count de Gobineau considers the degeneracy he depicts to be chiefly the result of undue racial mixture. This becomes clear from other passages in the letter.

As for anti-intellectualism, there can be no doubt that Gobineau like Rousseau placed life above knowledge, intuition above intellect. One cannot agree with writers who, contending that Gobineau glorified the role of the intellect, oppose him to Thomas Carlyle or other champions of intuition. In fact Gobineau, while recognizing the importance

of man's rationalistic faculties, put his faith mainly in intuition. He was a pluralist to whom ideas were expressive of race. He even went so far as to deny the existence of universal ideas. Believing, as he did, in individual truths rather than in absolute truth, he was often very close to pragmatism.

In the matter of anti-intellectualism and love of simplicity, it is especially the story *Akrivie Phrangopoulo* of the *Souvenirs de voyage* that brings to mind Rousseau. There is a paradisiac quality to this story that recalls another eighteenth century author, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. The story relates the love of an English sea-captain of good family for an almost savage girl in Naxos, one of the Cyclade group of islands in the Greek archipelago. Gobineau here shows a strong predilection for simplicity and naturalness; one is here at the opposite pole from the modern feministic ideal. Like Maurice Barrès whose sentence "l'intelligence, cette petite chose à la surface de nous-mêmes" is renowned, he felt that the role of the intellect and the importance of knowledge have been overrated. The important thing was for people to be true to themselves.

Close as he may seem to Rousseau in his suspicion of urban civilization, he is in fact always thinking of the unfortunate effect of excessive racial mixture, of its intellectual as well as its physical consequences. Aside from his distrust of complex heredities he could not think without misgiving of the effect on the modern individual of the confusion of cultures.

In Rousseau's writings the words *primitiveness* and *nature* tended to be abstract. Saint Preux and Julie of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* may of course be considered to represent Jean Jacques himself with Mme. d'Houdetot, but they are also in a sense simply fictions, as Gustave Lanson has pointed out. These characters are in strong contrast with the personalities, so firmly set in reality, that one encounters in most of Gobineau's stories.

It is important to distinguish clearly between the respective ideals of Gobineau and Rousseau. The anti-intellectualism of the two thinkers was fundamentally very different. The eighteenth century *philosophe* was hostile to reason because men had by the use of it intensified the struggle for existence and enhanced natural inequality. This advocate of nature was forever devising schemes which should create an artificial equality. Gobineau's quarrel with reason was because of its tendency to interfere unwarrantably with individualism. He could not object to reason on account of its aggravation of the struggle for existence, for he believed in strenuous living and admired physical and intellectual

superiority in almost equal degree. Loathing mediocrity as he did, his great concern was lest the superior fail to come to the top. We are aided in understanding Gobineau by the following passage in *Le voyage à Terre-Neuve*:

Ce n'est pas le théâtre où ils agissent ni les intérêts qu'ils remuent qui font les hommes grands; c'est uniquement le poids de domination qu'ils savent faire peser sur les choses, et le pâtre qui sait vouloir est dans son étroite sphère plus élevé qu'un potentat incertain de ses voies.

This surely is different from the tranquil ideal of Rousseau.

Gobineau had a tendency to idealize the primitive Aryan and his *Essai* defends a rationalized system, but he is more realistic than Rousseau and not given to thinking of man in the abstract. For, while romantic and vitalistic in religion and in literary matters, Rousseau was a rationalist in juridical and social questions. In his vocabulary the word *nature* could mean reason or sentiment according to whether it was a question of natural right or natural religion. In social and political questions Gobineau seems closer to the realistic empiricism of a Montesquieu whose interest was in what has been and is. Rousseau's quest seems mainly to have been for what ought to be. As for Monsieur Lange's criticism I have said that the term "anarchic individualism" can not be correctly applied to either author. Rousseau the artist preached the moral independence of the individual, but in none of his writings do we find social anarchy advocated. Gobineau's individualism is the reverse of anarchical. He was a traditionalist and religionist and in many ways extremely close to Maurice Barrès.

Because of their respective types of individualism Gobineau and Rousseau may both be said to belong in the vitalistic current, which became so pronounced in the later nineteenth century. With his conception of the "*fil de roi*" Gobineau can be said to have foreshadowed Nietzsche's *Superman*.

In conclusion I would say that what stands out is not the resemblance between the two thinkers, which is superficial, but rather the fundamental difference in their respective ideals and outlook on life. The influence they have had on their followers, in both cases incalculably great, has been in most things of an exactly opposite nature.

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WHY STUDY FOREIGN LANGUAGES?¹

THE alert observer cannot fail to have been struck by the fact that modern language teachers, in growing numbers, feel constrained publicly to vindicate the study of modern languages. The long-cherished secret conviction of many so-called educators, namely, that modern languages are only a necessary evil, is now frequently heard openly expressed. This aversion to foreign languages is considerably aggravated by the poor financial circumstances in which most schools find themselves. There would be all too great an inclination to economize precisely in the field of foreign languages, were it not for a certain element of prestige involved. Foreign languages are still, admittedly, a part of the curriculum of any self-respecting school. Therefore, they are permitted to exist, for better or for worse, although their value is obviously considered to be nil. Very naturally, the conception of the foreign languages as a *necessary evil* has infected the students, as well, to an injurious extent. Since the American school incorporates the principle of the student's freedom to elect his subjects, the status of the foreign languages is largely determined by public opinion among students and faculty. Thus, foreign languages, formally on an equal footing with the other fields of instruction, are seriously handicapped, especially since the introduction of so many subjects of one and the same mode of thinking, in the social sciences and natural sciences. The basis of equality is not the mode of thinking, as it ought to be, but *fields*, and since a foreign language is one *field*, the handicap is obvious.

It is impossible to enumerate all of the reasons why the foreign languages are considered as necessary evils, but we will mention a few which directly concern the representatives of foreign language instruction.

One obvious weakness evidenced by modern language teachers is their uncertainty as to the value of a foreign language as an *educational* medium. To be sure, one reads many articles about the uses, the advantages, and the significance of the study of foreign languages, but most of these discussions are extremely vague and are confined to the *practical* uses of foreign languages for the learner. In addition, the whole question is always treated as if it were an isolated entity, whereas the educational value of foreign languages should be discovered through comparison with the educational value of other fields of study. In the following consideration of a few of these problems, we make no pretense

¹Address delivered at the meeting of the German Division of the Modern Language Association of Southern California. Winter, 1935.

of exhaustiveness, wishing merely to suggest and, perhaps, to stimulate further studies.

I. Practicability:

Most of those who are dealing with this problem endeavor to prove the practicability of foreign language studies. They attempt to show how useful a knowledge of foreign languages is in connection with the sciences and with business. But all these attempts at justification are of doubtful validity. Foreign languages may be of practical use or they may not be, according as opportunities for their practical application may later occur. But rather than entering into a futile discussion of such a question, let us ask, Which intellectual fields are *practical*?—i.e., assist one in making a living?—The natural sciences? What one can learn in high schools and colleges concerning them is scarcely of any practical value. Yes, but the social sciences are very *practical*! This assertion, also, is untrue. Familiarity with all the economic and political systems is worthless from a strictly practical viewpoint—from the money-making angle. I dare say, that ninety per cent of all that is taught in the schools is of no direct and practical utility. To an authority in Home Economics who, by virtue of a chance acquaintanceship with the French language, is teaching that language, all the arts of cookery have become impracticable. Broadly speaking, the economic crisis of these last few years should have made it clear to us that the *practical* value of every form of intellectual education is, at best, highly relative. Very few men are able to apply practically that which they have learned, for circumstances determine the future of a man to a far greater extent than does what he has studied in school. Most of the instruction given in schools has only an *indirect* influence upon practical life. The *practical* side of language instruction is as relative as is that of any other field. A young person's interest in a particular field is in many instances the result of external factors, whether family pressure, social circumstances, fear of the future (the cause of student inflation in social sciences), chance, or the influence of a good teacher. In most cases, that which is *practical* is gained only by practical experience, and the effort of many schools, nowadays, to provide utilitarian instruction, is usually at the expense of a great waste of time, and the supposedly *practical* instruction is, at best, only semi-practical. *Practical* things can be learned much quicker in practical life. The attempt to purvey practical life in neat packages of theoretical knowledge has always been a clumsy undertaking. Furthermore, the logical outcome of such a course would be the vocational school, and no one would seriously maintain such to be the ideal of education. Although we do not consider the practical side to be of great

importance, we fully recognize that the educational propagandists will always make this conception of *practicability* their chief argument in appeals to tax-payers for support of educational institutions—an argument which is not pedagogic, but is purely opportunistic and political. The main issue stressed today has not to do with the education of young people but with the preservation of an overdeveloped educational system. Money and students are desired, and this explains the yielding of some of the old, intellectual fields, such as the languages, philosophy, history and mathematics, before the so-called *practical* fields—fields which give many immature and mediocre individuals, also, the semblance of an education.

Languages, and mathematics, as well, are attacked, nowadays, because they are of only relative value in a system concerned to accommodate the greatest possible number of students. The greater part of the *students*, so-called, cannot study languages to advantage, because they lack the character and intelligence traits necessary. Masses can no more learn foreign languages than they can master mathematics. The learning of a foreign language demands certain qualities which are possessed or attained by comparatively few individuals—consistent effort, patience, mental grasp of applications, and so forth.

II. Cultural values:

The comprehension and appreciation of various cultures are again and again stressed as the abiding values derived from the study of foreign languages. But here, too, we cannot avoid feeling that a certain superficiality attaches to the appraisal. One often hears it said that such study furthers world peace and that cultural understanding brings the nations closer together. This may be true to some extent, but it cannot be denied that the history of European countries, where the study of foreign languages is greatly stressed as an educational medium, indicates only too often the opposite. The value of foreign languages in this respect is exaggerated, not to mention the fact that most American students never advance beyond the reading of anecdotes, and receive their knowledge of foreign lands only through their more or less well-informed teacher. The idea of *understanding* foreign nations seems to us to be an over-emphasized aim. Far more important is the question, What has the foreign culture to contribute to our own individual and social culture? Understanding does not necessarily constitute a gain, but the study of something foreign is stimulating, even if it is not understood completely.

If we assume that an individual seriously desires to understand a foreign people, then we believe that the value for him therein consists

not so much in the intrinsic *better understanding* of the foreign country, as in that his eyes are opened as regards his own country. We see in that the chief value: Knowledge of one's self, gained by comparison with the others. This point needs particular emphasis in the present epoch, when it is so clear that over-specialization has led to a serious crisis. One can evaluate, and very often, understand, only by means of comparison. By comparison, one achieves a wholesome perspective of one's own country and of foreign countries. Neither are feelings of superiority, nor feelings of inferiority, then, so likely to develop. The comparative method should be more universally applied to all training. The mere stressing of *social integration*, now so much the mode, does not suffice. The comparative method transcends social integration because it comprehends the comparison of wholes, whereas *social integration* stresses unity within a whole. But even if one desires to stop with the idea of social integration, the foreign languages are of great value, from the pedagogic standpoint. The unity of a civilization can be especially well emphasized in foreign language study, since the schools have no chance to divide up the social whole of a foreign civilization into a dozen independent, isolated fields (economics, sociology, etc.), as is done in regard to the civilization of one's own country. But in order to achieve such aims, the language departments would have to bring about considerable change in their offerings.

III. Pedagogical aims:

The educational advantages of foreign language instruction may be grouped under two heads: development of mental powers of the student, and educational advantages in relation to other fields. We have made special reference to one specific character trait necessary for any student—consistency in effort. One cannot take a foreign language course without practically daily application to the work. The method of postponing all work until three days before an examination, possible in most other fields, is of no avail. Patience is another virtue which one can practice here. One is able, after a few days, to understand a social theory, but not a foreign language. We cannot enter into all of the separate advantages. They have been quoted often enough. However, such a treatment of the field, taken by itself, does not preclude the question, Have not other fields the same advantages? The answer can only be in the affirmative. But the foreign languages possess still other advantages which can scarcely be claimed for other fields.

The purpose of education is conceded to be development of the character and intellect of the individual. Character training, however, is less stressed in our school system than is the development of intellect,

which is really the theoretical objective. By way of the brain, one seeks to reach the human being and his possibilities. We train the intellect in our schools and we do this with the help of so-called scientific subjects. *Reality* appears as chaos, to be mastered through scientific *thinking*; this trains the power of thought and makes the world *intelligible*. The means whereby reality is to be mastered is the *theory* or its practical form, the experiment. There result two radically opposite poles, theory and reality. The educational effect is very different according as the one or the other is stressed. The important question is, Which dominates, reality or theory? If reality, then the individual finds a mental and spiritual balance between himself and the outside world. If theory, we have, in the extreme case, the *self-sufficient individual* whose own thought processes are the beginning and the end of all existence. We touch upon extremes here, for there will always, indeed, be a certain minimum of experience present, even in the fields in which the experience of reality is incontestably almost nil, and vice versa, there will be an indispensable minimum of theory necessary even where experience is the outstanding factor. If we should ask which fields are more dependent upon theory and which upon experience, the answer would be a different one for each field. In the case of the social sciences, theoretical thinking undoubtedly predominates. In these sciences it is often even necessary to define the reality. We define what is real to us. The possibility of direct experience hardly exists, so to speak. For the average man, the economic reality means the buying of food and clothes, paying the rent, and so forth. All the rest of the economic organism is conveyed to him in abstract form on printed paper. It is a sort of intellectual tin can industry. If, for instance, I use the expression *stock exchange*, then this reality must first be explained, and if I describe it as the market for intangible property, then I wonder how many men are able to grasp directly such a reality. Often it is very difficult to tell what is meant by *reality* in the social sciences. It is by no means a weakness of these sciences, alone, but it is the tragic effect of our present social pattern, in which the individual's sphere of experience is constantly narrowed and therewith his feeling of insecurity is continuously increased. His social life becomes simpler, his dependency upon a reality which he cannot experience grows more complicated.

In the natural sciences, also, the theoretical predominates, although here, the reality is again and again demonstrated before the spectator. It is usually a *prepared* reality, a world to itself,—pedagogically useful, however.

For lack of space, we omit consideration of other fields. It suffices to recognize the principle. It is certainly clear that in the languages

reality dominates completely. Theory is recognized in the forbidding term, *grammar*. A language is a whole, no partial or prepared reality, and, furthermore, it is a relatively stable entity. It must be seen and learned as a whole. The reader should realize that, in emphasizing the value of foreign languages, we recognize that there exists a fundamental difference between sciences as sciences, and sciences as educational media. We deny that the different sciences possess equal validity as educational agents and we give the preference to foreign languages, although, as pure sciences, they are equal with others.

Returning to the beginning of our investigation, let us repeat—education, today, is training of the intellect, and thereby we influence the character of an individual. What, now, is the relationship between character, theory, and reality? We have seen, already, that, in most of the sciences, theory dominates. It does not in the languages. Therefore, the effects upon the individual are essentially different. To draw an extreme parallel, men are capable of dying for a social theory which they have made their religion (the many social 'isms of today are classic examples), but I have yet to see the man who would give his life for the German article or the irregular French verbs. The danger is especially great for young people. The awakening of the intellect is a tremendous event, the balance furnished by wide experience is lacking, and theory is easily accepted as absolute truth. Pure intellectualism makes for estrangement from the world or for ruthless fanaticism.² Ideas have an expansive tendency. They absorb the mind and give rise to most extreme forms of hysterical emotional explosions. Unbalanced intellectualism and emotionalism are akin. The reader will protest that this is the case in Europe rather than in America. We doubt that. It is true, thanks to the youth of the United States of America, that the reality has always triumphed, but who will not admit that in the last few years simple theories have arisen which assume the absolute authority of a religion. The fact that they are not called by the name of Socialism, Communism, or Fascism, proves nothing. We do not want to discuss such social theories, but we wish to draw attention to the educational side of the problem. An abstract form of thinking easily absorbs the individual, especially in a time of social or economic crisis. We recognize that, especially in the United States, under the influence of economic

²Again we would stress the educational aspect of the problem, bearing in mind that theory fulfills quite another function as a working tool in scientific life. The *working tool* principle is harmless for men who have experimented year after year and have gained, through experience, a perception of the relativity of their experiments. But the effect upon young men is of a different sort. With them, theory becomes experience.

progress, the sciences, themselves, have sought to sustain the dominance of reality through specialization. But now that this tendency of specialization, itself, has failed,—since partial, selected reality is only semi-reality, or none, the tendency is all the greater to replace the lack of experience by an absolute theory. One hears of *red* students, *red* teachers, Fascists, technocrats, and what not, more than ever; a regular inflation of ten-cent-store philosophies has occurred.

In summary, one may say that, from a purely pedagogic standpoint, an education based upon theoretical disciplines can be only harmful. The foreign languages act as a healthful antidote and are, at the same time, efficient in training the mental powers. Against this whole argument, one could raise the objection that it is in Europe, precisely where the foreign languages are universally taught and where the social sciences rank low as educational disciplines, that emotional extremes are most prominent. That is true. But the *social* and *political* education of the individual in Europe is achieved differently, outside the school. School education cannot be regarded as the absolute panacea for all human ills. It comprises only a small part of education, the greater part taking place in the home and in the social whole. But although the school does not exert an absolute influence, its representatives ought to have a clear idea as to the educative functions it does possess. It should be clear that foreign languages are today a wholesome means of education. A language is an organic, living whole, and, therefore, can scarcely be made a religion. Whoever has failed to realize that the many exceptions to the rules in foreign languages are a really valuable proof that the languages are living organisms, is a mechanical teacher. In the foreign languages, the reality is experienced, and grammar, as theory, is truly a *working tool*. Therein lies the pedagogic value of the foreign languages.

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THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PANEL AT ST. LOUIS

“THE Place of Foreign Language Study in an Integrated Secondary School Program” is the subject for discussion at a new section of the Department of Superintendence which meets at Saint Louis on February 24, 1936. The section was organized as a result of the efforts of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers. The national committee appointed for this purpose, consisting of James B. Tharp, Ohio State University, Stephen Pitcher, Madison School, St. Louis, Bert E. Young, Indiana University, and Miss Lilly Lindquist, Supervisor of Foreign Language, Detroit Public Schools, chairman, has arranged a panel discussion under the direction of Mr. Wilford Aikin, Ohio State University, Chairman of the Commission on the Relationship of Secondary School and College of the Progressive Education Association.

The contribution of foreign languages to the progressive curriculum will be discussed by a number of prominent educators: Paul Diederich, Ohio State University High School, Travelling Fellow for the Evaluation Staff of the Eight-Year Experiment in Curriculum-Building; Henry L. Smith, Dean of the School of Education, Indiana University; William F. Russell, Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University; E. W. Bagster-Collins, Professor of the Teaching of German, Teachers College, Columbia University; De Witt Morgan, Principal, Arsenal Technical Schools, Indianapolis; Edward H. Cameron, Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Illinois; Francis F. Powers, College of Education, University of Washington; Laura B. Johnson, School of Education, Wisconsin High School, Madison, Wisconsin.

The National Federation will be represented by Miss Lindquist and Henry Grattan Doyle, Dean of Columbian College, George Washington University, Washington, D. C., and Managing Editor of the *Modern Language Journal*.

Modern Language instruction is thus given recognition at the national meeting of superintendents, principals and supervisors. A stenographic record of the discussion will be made available by the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers and salient features will be published in the *Modern Language Journal*.

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POLITICAL REVIEWS

FRANCE

THE financial situation remains critical. Fundamentally, the monetary problem of France lies in the fact that Great Britain and the United States have depreciated their currencies by about forty per cent. This means that costs and prices in France have been thrown far out of normal relationship with those of other countries. There are but two remedies: a drastic deflation of costs and prices or a depreciation of the franc to correspond with the depreciation of other currencies. During his administration Premier Laval favored deflation, involving higher taxes, reduced wages and profits. This course is filled with hardships for the French people.

Hence, recently, Paul Reynaud, a former Finance Minister, was applauded in the Chamber of Deputies when he pleaded for devaluation as "the only sound and only possible solution" of the financial crisis. Now, the Finance Minister, Marcel Regnier, suggests that the government might consider devaluation in connection with a general stabilization of world currencies. This will undoubtedly be the next great chapter in the history of international finance, but the British Government is not at present favorably inclined.

The future of the franc is of great importance to this country. First, devaluation of the franc would deprive the United States and Great Britain of some of the competitive advantage obtained by the devaluation of the dollar and of the pound sterling. Second, in view of the heavy flight of French capital to this country since the devaluation of the dollar on January 31, 1934, devaluation of the franc might precipitate a large efflux of gold from the United States, unless an international crisis undermined confidence in French finances.

So far the heavy outflow of gold from France has been compensated for by influxes of gold from other European countries whose monetary position is even more uncertain. Thus the Bank of France has not lost probably more than \$700,000,000 in gold since the devaluation of the dollar. While that is a large figure, it is not a cause for real anxiety as the last report of the Bank of France showed an ample gold reserve of \$4,575,000,000.

Most American bankers have been convinced ever since the devaluation of the dollar that France would have to alter the basis of her currency. Few of them expected that the nation would resist so long.

For several months, the Deputies had supported Laval in his strenuous efforts to prevent a general war. On December 17, he came before

them with "his last attempt at a peaceful settlement" of the Italo-Ethiopian problem. He asked the Deputies to postpone discussion of the plan worked out in cooperation with the British Foreign Secretary, Samuel Hoare, until the League of Nations had acted upon it.

Premier Stanley Baldwin promised likewise to give the House of Commons the reasons which impelled him to approve the *peace* plan outlined by Samuel Hoare and Premier Laval.

It was hoped that Mussolini would accept the plan with reservations. These reservations referred to the possible foreign interests which may have obtained concessions in the projected zone of Italian influence. Under the terms advanced, Italy was to retain a considerable portion of occupied territory, and Ethiopia to secure a *corridor* of serviceable width through Eritrea to the port of Assab. France eagerly expected some kind of a peaceful gesture from Mussolini.

The Franco-British offer, however, met with immediate general disfavor. The small League powers bitterly opposed it as a dismemberment of Ethiopia for the profit of Italy. Mussolini, on the other hand, declared that the plan was not acceptable. As an immediate result of the collapse, Sir Samuel Hoare, co-author with Laval of the proposals, resigned his post in London, the British Cabinet refusing further support. The position of Laval was also considerably weakened, through the resignation of the most influential member of his Cabinet, Herriot, as the leader of the Radical Socialist Party. Edouard Daladier was chosen in his place. The first consequences of the new leadership was its refusal to continue cooperation with the Laval government. The six Radical-Socialist members of the Cabinet resigned, and Laval found it impossible to continue.

A new Cabinet was formed, on January 24, by Albert Sarraut. It consists mainly of Radical-Socialists, with strong wings to the Right and the Left to give it stability. The four-year term of the Deputies will soon end. The new government is not expected to do much about the franc or the Italian sanctions until the elections are over.

The new Cabinet is considered by Italy with less favor than the previous one. Mussolini hopes that the Foreign Minister, Pierre Flandin, who is a moderate, will hold the Radicals in check. The Cabinet, however, is inclined rather toward agreement with London than toward sympathy with Rome.

The real foreign problem of France remains the integration of Franco-German relations in a large scheme of European pacification. A new cause of friction is going to be the demilitarized Rhineland zone.

Germany has promised England not to raise this delicate question, but Hitler is secretly preparing to put Europe in presence of another *fait accompli* as soon as the general situation is favorable to his plans. He may choose, however, to win, first, colonial concessions. Far-seeing statesmanship should move France to initiate a reconsideration of colonial mandates in favor of Germany. Then, perhaps, through English mediation and cooperation, a more constructive and conciliating Franco-German policy could be attempted.

In order to strengthen Anglo-French friendship, the day after the royal funeral, Sir John Simon, Secretary for Home Affairs, paid tribute to George V in a special radio broadcast in French. The courtesy of the British government was deeply appreciated in France. Monsieur Flandin, who had accompanied President Lebrun to London, discussed the German problem with Anthony Eden. They decided, it was reported from London, that neither Britain nor France would enter into negotiations with Germany without prior consultation with each other.

Most foreign representatives in London for the funeral of King George crossed the channel to discuss European affairs in Paris. A steady stream of visitors from the nations of the Little Entente, Russia, Bulgaria and Austria, passed through the doors of the *Quay D'Orsay*. The Austrian question seemed to have played a large part in the conversation.

Strenuous efforts are being made both by the American and French to establish better economic and financial relations. The French Commerce Minister, Georges Bonnet, has asked power to speed negotiations for a commercial treaty with the United States. A French commission, appointed six months ago, is working on a program for a complete removal of quotas and the substitution of a new system of tariff rates.

Recently, the Cathedral of Verdun, seriously damaged during the World War and since restored, was reconsecrated. Begun in 451, it had been nearly destroyed on two previous occasions, during the French Revolution and again in the War of 1870. It stands as an impressive example of the tenacity of French Catholic tradition in Lorraine.

Next year, Paris will celebrate the centennary of the *Arc de Triomphe*. Planned by Napoleon in commemoration of the victories of France, it was not completed until 1836. It is now the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and has become the temple of the patriotic life of the nation.

PAUL PÉRIGORD

University of California at Los Angeles

GERMANY

In a speech at the opening of the Winter Relief campaign in Berlin on October 9th, Herr Hitler blamed Germany's economic difficulties on the class warfare of the Marxists. He considered the class war to be at an end now and the ideal of *Volksgemeinschaft* substituted for it.

On October 14th three of the leading Students' Corps decided to dissolve themselves. An order was issued on October 27th on instructions from Hitler, stating that young people could become members of the Nazi Party after four years' service in the official youth organizations. On the 8th of November the *Stahlhelm* was dissolved by an order of the Führer, since its aims were seen to have been achieved with the restoration of the military strength of the Reich.

On October 21st the German Government's withdrawal from the League took effect, all its financial obligations having been discharged.

On November 1st the *Air War and Technical Academy* was formally opened with the Reichsführer, the Minister of War, the Commander-in-Chief of the army and General Göring as Air Minister, present. The new Reich war flag was hoisted for the first time on November 7th when the first conscript recruits took the oath.

A commercial treaty with Poland, recognizing the most-favored-nation principle in trade exchanges between the two countries and granting to Germany some specific tariff reductions, was signed in Warsaw on November 4th. Throughout the entire period of the Italo-Ethiopian struggle the German Government has observed the strictest press neutrality. There was a semi-official statement in Berlin early in November to the effect that the Government's policy was to continue only normal trade with Italy and Ethiopia and that *sanction-breaking* was not contemplated. German policy would, however, lay particular stress on the maintenance of normal economic activity in all directions and in safeguarding German needs against untoward effects of the sanctions measures, which had already led to a lack of some important commodities in international trade.

On November 21st a meeting took place in Berlin between the Reichsführer, Adolf Hitler, the Foreign Minister, Baron Constantin von Neurath and the French Ambassador, André Francois-Poncet. This has been described as the first friendly diplomatic exchange between Germany and France of importance since the introduction of the German conscription law on March 16th. Nothing is known officially as to the scope of this conversation, which is supposed to have dealt with the general political situation.

On October 28th the Ministry of Propaganda ordered that all church periodicals be censored prior to publication. Two days later the Reich Church Committee issued a circular forbidding the use of church premises for the discussion of *Church politics* in order to prevent the reading of declarations from the pulpit. At this time there were three church administrations side by side: the Provisional Administration of the Confessional Movement, Herr Kerrl's Committee and the organization of Reich Bishop Müller, who refused to resign. On the 2nd of December the German Evangelical Church administration was placed under the unified control of the Reich church and State church committees established by Hans Kerrl, Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs. On January 12th a manifesto, reaffirming the spiritual leadership of German Protestantism and the rejection by the Opposition Movement of Herr Kerrl's Church Committees, was read by confessional pastors from pulpits throughout Prussia.

According to figures published on the 9th of January the total number of the unemployed at the beginning of the year was 2,506,806, some 100,000 less than the year before.

Also on January 9th the Supreme Council of the League of Poles in Germany protested to Herr Hitler concerning the continuance of the German policy, despite official promises to the contrary, of Germanizing the Polish minority of some million and a half persons.

A message from the leader of the Reich Youth of January 6th foreshadowed the conscription of children from the age of ten in the State Youth organizations. Joining first the Reich Youth League for athletics, pre-military and social and political training, the best of them would at the age of 14 enter the Nazi Party's Hitler Youth Organization.

On the 13th of January the anniversary of the Saar plebiscite, which is regarded as a victory for nationalism and as a means of removing one possible cause of a new Franco-German conflict, was officially celebrated throughout Germany.

GERALD M. SPRING

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SPAIN

The political situation in Spain during the last few months has been characterized by frequent changes in ministries and by a complete disagreement and lack of cooperation among the political factions in matters of internal policy. Matters become more complicated for the foreign observer when it is known that over twenty parties are represented in the political life of the country and that none has enough force to command a majority of deputies. After the fall of Azaña in 1933, the parties of the Left ceased to have the power and influence that they had had in the first *Cortes*. The country had swung to the Center and Right parties. The ministries formed since then have been coalitional groups, formed mainly by leaders of the conservative republican sectors. Such coalitional groups have experienced great difficulties in their attempts to solve the complex problems that confront Spain. Crisis has come after crisis, new premiers and new ministers have come and gone, while the national budget is still to be approved, and other economic points of capital importance for the welfare of the nation await solution. We must bear in mind that at the bottom of all the governmental troubles through which Spain is passing lies the wide gap, the passionate rift existing between the extreme liberal parties and the ultraconservative Right. Deep differences of opinion separate the two camps, and these differences of opinion are voiced so violently and so bitterly in the press and in the political meetings that in the confusion one can discern veiled threats of a civil war, and the future appears dark indeed.

No less than four changes in ministries have taken place since last September. The first two ministries were presided by Sr. Joaquín Chapaprieta, with variations in different portfolios, filled by members of the Radical (Center) and *Ceda* (Right) parties. Certain members of the Government were implicated in a series of accusations made to the President of the Republic by a certain Strauss. The matter was brought to the *Cortes* and the ensuing investigation brought out the existence of graft and corruption in secret gambling licenses given to Strauss. Several deputies and even Sr. Lerroux, were under suspicion. Sr. Lerroux resigned his Cabinet post, while the *Ceda*, headed by that staunch conservative Sr. Gil Robles, Minister of War, was accused of temporizing with these irregularities for the purpose of assuring further support from the party of Sr. Lerroux. The predominant influence of the Conservative parties in governmental matters was coming to an end.

On December 10 the government of Sr. Chapaprieta resigned; lack of cooperation on the part of the *Cortes* to the solution of economic problems was given as the cause. The lack of unity in the *Cortes* made the choice of a new government difficult. Demands that the *Cortes* be dissolved and that a new legislative body be elected by the people were heard. On December 15th a new coalition government, headed by Sr. Manuel Portela Valladares, was established. But, in reality, this government did not differ substantially from the previous one. The ex-President of the Cabinet, Sr. Chapaprieta, became the new Minister of Finance (Hacienda). The conservative *Ceda* party, now out of power, and the parties of the Left promised to offer serious obstacles when the policies of the new ministry should be presented to the *Cortes*. Sr. Portela Valladares solved the problem by having the *Cortes* suspended by decree until January.

The opposition, now out of the *Cortes*, took a more violent aspect. Political meetings of all colors began taking place throughout Spain. Both the Right and the Left were waiting for the reopening of the *Cortes* in January to excoriate the Government. January came. The *Cortes* were declared suspended for another month. Indignation flared on all sides. Sr. Gil Robles attacked the suspension of the *Cortes* as unconstitutional and as an arbitrary act of the President. Equal accusations were made by a number of deputies in a formal document addressed to the President of the Permanent Commission of the *Cortes*.

When this body met to consider the accusations against the President of the Republic and the Government of Sr. Portela Valladares, the decree dissolving the *Cortes* and proclaiming a new election of deputies to be held on February 16, was given. What many expected and others feared had come. The second *Cortes* of the Spanish Republic had expired with very little work of importance done. The lack of a definite majority for any one party, the bitter opposition between Conservatives and Liberals, the lack of powerful leaders, occasional graft and petty politics had made of these two years a period of barren struggle for the progress and consolidation of the Republic.

All parties are engaged at present in campaigns of propaganda for the coming elections. The desire to succeed at the polls makes the Right to form alliances with Monarchists and other elements not all of them sympathetic to the Republic. The Left also is flirting with extreme elements of dubious value for the safety of democratic government, such as Communists and Syndicalists.

H. CORBATÓ

University of California at Los Angeles

REVIEWS

El Acento Castellano. Por T. Navarro Tomás. Discurso leído por el autor en el acto de su recepción académica el día 19 de Mayo de 1935. Madrid. Tipografía de Archivos, 1935. 46 pp. Pp. 47-59: Contestación de Don Miguel Artigas Ferrando.

"Where, among the modern languages, is there to be found a more beautiful one than Spanish?"—señor Madariaga asks in his *Semblanzas literarias contemporáneas*. The author of this review, however, still remembers a lecture heard many years ago in which the speaker, a distinguished Italian scholar, discoursed for a whole hour on the subject "Italian, the most beautiful language." It is to be suspected that every person, whether a scholar or a layman, feels very much the same way about his mother tongue. Hence the justice of señor Navarro Tomás' remark when, placing himself above all nationalistic and all sentimental prejudices, he begins by declaring in one of the first pages of his study: "Toda lengua es grata, dulce y armoniosa para quien la habla como idioma natal" (p. 16). For it happens with languages very much as with babies, each being the most charming and the most beautiful—for its own parents. Which means that if you want to know what your language—or your baby, for that matter—really looks like, you had better ask outsiders, which is exactly what the author of the study we are commenting upon has done as a first step in his discussion of the Castilian accent.

That every spoken language has a certain character and physiognomy of its own is a fact as well-known as it is generally forgotten when speaking one's own language. The reason is that, such a character being largely determined by the accent, it is as easy to perceive the latter in the case of a foreign language, or even in one's own when spoken with a foreign accent, as it is difficult to perceive it when speaking one's own native language. The assumption in such a case is rather that one speaks without accent, *just like a native*, forgetting that there is no spoken language without some kind of accent—precisely, the kind of accent with which the native speaks his language, which must be assumed is the correct one. The trouble is that, as the author points out, "La fonética, hasta ahora, se ha ocupado principalmente del estudio individual de los sonidos articulados dentro del reducido campo de la palabra aislada. Son escasos los trabajos dedicados al estudio del mecanismo fonético de la lengua en la frase y en el discurso" (p. 12). To which one might perhaps add that such "individual study of sounds" must in the nature of things be always more or less faulty, the real value of each sound being in the end determined by its articulation in the single word, of course, but also, to a certain extent at least, by its articulation in the whole sentence or phrase in which the word occurs, that is to say, by the accent of the language in question. Hence also the special significance of this study as a complement to the author's works on Spanish phonetics, among which his *Manual de pronunciación española* has been ever since its appearance the standard work on the subject.

That the accent of a language thus understood is essentially a musical phenomenon, a form of singing, one would say, is perfectly evident, and as such might be considered, as the author says, "dentro de la estética musical" (p. 14).

But while scientific studies of the kind, in the case of Spanish as well as in that of the other languages, may be scarce, this does not prevent each one of us from having some more or less definite impression as to the accent of the several languages with which one is familiar. Variations are, of course, possible, and, as stated, the testimony of outsiders is to be preferred in this case; on the whole, however, the impressions are rather uniform. To take the case of the Castilian accent, for example. Gathering a number of such judgments by foreign professors, travellers, and writers (English, American, Swedish, etc.¹), the author finds that three main traits are generally pointed out as particularly characteristic of the Castilian accent: "sonoridad, aire varonil y tono de dignidad." As to the reasons for this, they have to do, as the author goes on now to explain, with the character of the Spanish vowels and greater frequency of some of their sounds in the Castilian language (that of *a* being the most frequent one), together with the intensity of the syllabic accent, peculiar intonation, etc. But while these reasons may serve to explain the above mentioned traits from a phonetic viewpoint, the essential reason is to be found in the corresponding traits of the national psychology, the accent appearing in the end as a question of character, as a psychological phenomenon. For as the author says, "El acento no está en las letras, ni en las palabras, ni en las frases, sino en la manera de decirlas" (p. 44). This "manera" is essentially a question of character, first with the individual, then with the group, and of this character the accent appears in the end both as a result and as an expression. "El carácter modela el acento, como causa emocional permanente de la expresión ordinaria y cotidiana, y el acento plasma y figura en el sonido la imagen del carácter, así que no sin fundamento se atribuyen a ambos indistintamente las cualidades que se observan en uno o en otro" (p. 38). And: "La idea del acento de un pueblo es inseparable del concepto que se tiene del carácter de ese mismo pueblo" (p. 37).

The above quotations may serve to give an idea of the broadness with which the author discusses the subject of the Castilian accent, not merely as a purely phonetic and more or less mechanical affair, but as a living psychological reality. A scientific document, on the one hand, and as such done with the mastery to be expected from such a distinguished scholar, his study is also, therefore, a human document of outstanding significance, and in both aspects it will be profitably read by all who are interested in the Spanish language, literature, and culture in general, whether teachers or students.

CÉSAR BARJA

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¹To the judgments quoted by the author of this study, we wish to add the following one by W. Somerset Maugham in his recently published book, *Don Fernando* (New York, Doubleday, 1935): "The (Spanish) language is an instrument of strength and delicacy. It has a grandeur that gives ample opportunity for oratorical effect . . . and a concreteness that enables it to be written with exquisite simplicity. It has a succinctness that Latin hardly surpasses . . . It has nobility and deliberation. Every letter counts; every syllable has value," pp. 87, 89.

Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung. By Hans Röhl. (Leipzig und Berlin, B. G. Teubner, 382 pp.)

Röhl presents the great figures of German literature in much the same fashion as a director would produce a play. We see the setting of the cultural stage; we hear the music of the poet's emotions; and follow the plot of forces and influences which motivate the actors, the authors. There is a life and movement in this volume which is seldom found in the histories of literature. There is also a keen aesthetic discussion of the various types of literary expression, and yet, the different phases and peculiar aspects of the periods in German literature are not neglected.

The book is arranged in sixteen chapters, a conclusion and a calendar of dates which offers, in a comprehensive unit, a survey of the most important authors, the best works of the year and a note on the literary history. The main body of the work is singularly free from a mass of names and dates. There is an evolutionary development which is evidenced on a social and historical background. Röhl treats the subject in much the same manner as did Kuno Francke in his *History of German Literature as determined by Social Forces*.

Röhl's sentences are a bit lengthy but not involved. By this means he has been able, not only, to encompass a thought or movement, but also, to evaluate and criticize it. The German is excellent, in fact the writing is almost an artistic achievement.

At the close under the heading of *Authors and Literature*, he includes a most valuable and essentially sound dissertation on: the history of literature and a science of the same; the content of literature—experience, the matter, *Weltanschauung*, social and generational; form of literature, inner and outer; and world-literature. The panorama is vast, its import significant, and its intent great. Röhl considers that an understanding of the German genius is almost essential to the cultured man.

He has attempted to give a living and vital account, colored with his own conviction that we must experience literature before we can understand it. He has combined weighty matter in a pleasing form. His critical knowledge is enlightening. He reveals the treasures of German literature and invites one to read the originals.

GEORGE NIEMI

University of Oregon

TEXT BOOKS
FRENCH

Seven French Plays. Edited by Colbert Searles. (Henry Holt and Company, 1935. \$2.00.)

The plays in the present volume cover the period of French Drama from 1730 to 1897, comprising the best of the XVIIIth century, *Le Jeu de l'Amour et du Hasard* and *Le Mariage de Figaro*, and some of the best of the XIXth century, *Le Gendre de Monsieur Poirier*, *Les Corbeaux*, and *Cyrano de Bergerac*. We are thus brought up to the threshold of the contemporary period. The present volume is intended as a companion volume to *Eight French Classic Plays*, published in 1932, covering the XVIIth century.

A consummation devoutly to be desired, and already prayed for by many, is that the present publishers will become speculative, generous and far-sighted enough to complete the series with a third volume. This last volume could be called *up-to-date French Drama* or *something new in French Drama* and would furnish a welcome addition to, as well as a change from, the heavily thumbled, time worn plays declaimed by so many succeeding generations. This fascinating Volume III would contain 12 or 15 plays (the modern play does not seem so devious and long-winded!), selected from the brilliantly written and highly variegated French dramatic production of *our own time*. There is a vast and alluring abundance of such material, almost unknown in this country, even to advanced students of drama. And what interesting sidelights such a volume would afford on recent developments in French thought, culture and civilization! Paris has recaptured her eminence as dramatic capital of the world (Hollywood to the contrary!) and in recent years has witnessed many epoch-making experimentations and vitalizing innovations.

Yet we must, *faute de mieux*, continue to offer to our students (some of whom are interested in the creative side of writing and acting) such heavy, soporific, outworn, dull, unreal, improbable, melodramatic and bombastic mush as *Zaire* and *Hernani*. I would think that even the Hugo enthusiasts among our teachers would blush to offer to our present day highly sophisticated and intensely un-Romantic students any of the ponderous and maudlin heroics of Hugo, unless it be done in the same spirit that some of the ancient olios are renewed along Broadway. The level of intelligence and artistic achievement in the cinema world seems high when compared with what we find in the plays of Victor Hugo.

Aside from this (perhaps superimposed) necessity of including Voltaire and Victor Hugo, the book is excellent. It is beautifully and accurately printed, *with wide and convenient margins* for notes and cross references ("Calling all Publishers"). There are convenient notes at the bottom of the page to explain literary and historical allusions. The vocabulary is quite adequate. But by far the most valuable and original part of the book is to be found in the short introduction to each author. These studies are brilliantly written, are stimulating and suggestive, also very scholarly; as, indeed, is everything that comes from the able pen of Colbert Searles.

ALEXANDER G. FITE

University of California at Los Angeles

La Poudre aux Yeux. Comédie en deux actes, by Labiche et Martin. Edited by Dale. (D. C. Heath and Company, 1935. xii ÷ 70 pp. text + 62 pp. exercises + 13 pp. notes + 30 pp. vocabulary. \$.68.)

Though Labiche wrote a number of his plays in collaboration with Martin, it is generally conceded this play is due entirely to his pen.

Born from a family of bourgeois, our playwright, in this charming comedy, gives us a sidelight on the frailties of human beings belonging to that great group which is the bulwark of the nation, *la bourgeoisie*.

This play, full of spontaneous gaiety and facile dialogue, offers easy reading, and is well adapted to conversation.

In the numerous exercises, the editors have stressed many important points of grammar.

A broad vocabulary of every-day French may be obtained through constant repetition. A study of verbs has been emphasized throughout in applied sentences. The questions, themes, etc., are based on the text, and the students must refer to it for form and content before writing the answer.

LOUIS F. D. BRIOIS

University of California at Los Angeles

A Brief Summary of French Grammar. By Eric V. Greenfield. (D. C. Heath and Company, 1935. vi + 106 pp. \$.92.)

This very brief summary of French grammar aims to give a topical outline of the cardinal points in French grammar covered in the first year university work or first two years high school work. The first 70 pages consist of 20 lessons with appropriate French and English exercises, the remainder of the book giving the conjugation of regular and irregular verbs and a French-English vocabulary.

As the author clearly states in his preface, this grammar is intended only as a supplement to a standard grammar, its purpose being to put in relief the fundamental principles involved in sentence structure, separated from the haze of many details which is so apt to leave the student with no true perspective of the factors involved and their relative importance. Thus, the book groups in each chapter under the headings of nouns, adjectives, verbs, pronouns, prepositions, etc., all information relative to that particular subject found in the elementary grammar courses, and provides at the end of each chapter valuable review exercises whereby the student can test his own knowledge.

In the opinion of the reviewer, this book could be a valuable supplement to an elementary course if carefully elucidated by the teacher. Its very briefness is perhaps its chief merit and its greatest defect. The author, in trying to categorize all the material for the sake of simplicity and brevity, has had to make many general statements which would lead to confusion, if not error, unless more explanations and exceptions are given than those noted by the author. Its necessarily limited treatment will not satisfy a careful, serious student even although intended merely as supplementary material, whereas its logical codification would be a help to the student who finds it difficult to see through a mass of detail for himself.

ANNE E. GIBSON

University of California at Los Angeles

GERMAN

So ist das Leben. Erzählungen von Fritz Müller-Partenkirchen. By F. W. Kaufmann and Gertrude H. Dunham. (D. C. Heath and Company, 1935. ix + 80 pp. text + 10 pp. notes + 19 pp. exercises + 49 pp. vocabulary. \$1.00.)

These eleven delightful short stories from Fritz Müller-Partenkirchen's *Gesang im Zuchthaus* will form a welcome addition to the growing list of easy literary reading adapted for the use of students in the second or third semester of college, or the third year of high school. The text is substantially that of the original work, but many teachers will regret that the editors have translated the passages containing dialect into High German. Students, too, will usually enjoy oral reading of dialect passages, and they may thus gain a much more adequate impression not only of the style of the author, but also of the life and culture of the German people. The exercises present adequate material for grammar review and word-building and for class discussion of the text.

The stories themselves are little masterpieces. The natural kindliness of the author, his love of humanity in all its phases, his sense of humour and his rare understanding of the problems of everyday life will appeal to all classes of students, awaken in them a desire to read more widely, and help to create a taste for good literature.

F. H. REINSCH

University of California at Los Angeles

Vier kleine Lustspiele. Edited by O. C. Burkhard. (D. C. Heath and Company, 1935. v + 212 pp. \$1.12.)

In presenting these four popular one-act comedies in one volume, the editor explains that they "have been selected, not because they are distinguished by great literary merit, but rather because they offer excellent material for more rapid reading for the second year in high school or the second or third semester in college."

The volume includes *Ein Knopf* by Julius Rosen (21 pages; 2 men, university professors, and 2 women), *Einer muss heiraten!* by Alexander Viktor Zechmeister, who wrote under the pseudonym of Alexander Wilhelmi (34 pages; 2 men, also university professors, and 2 women), *Eigensinn* by Roderich Julius Benedix (30 pages; 3 men and 3 women), and *Unter vier Augen* by Ludwig Fulda (42 pages; 3 men and 2 women).

Each play is followed by good exercises, containing questions based on the text, idiomatic expressions, lists of related words, examples for word building, and exercises for forming sentences with the use of the idioms. Difficult expressions are explained in the footnotes, and a complete vocabulary has been added. A brief biographical sketch of each author is given in the Preface.

The volume will be welcome by some instructors not only for class use, but also for production by the class or club.

MEYER KRAKOWSKI

Los Angeles Junior College

Readings in Scientific and Technical German. By Paul Holroyd Curtis. (Henry Holt and Company, 1935. xiii + 284 pp. text + cxiii pp. vocabulary. \$1.75).

Readings in Scientific and Technical German is adapted for second or third year students of physical sciences in college. Nearly half of the 284 pages of the text is given to physical sciences and technology, and about one-fifth each to chemistry and biology.

A vivid impression of the subject matter treated in the text may be gained from the following list of stem-words taken from the vocabulary, each of which forms the initial element of ten or more compound words: *Atom* . . . (*Atomart Atombau* . . . *Atomzertrümmerungsversuch*, 32 compounds in all); *Eisen* . . . (20 compounds); *Heiz* . . . (10); *Knochen* . . . (13); *Kraft* . . . (16); *Luft* . . . (18); *Seiten* . . . (15); *Sonnen* . . . (20); *Stahl* . . . (14); *Strom* . . . (12); *Wärme* . . . (10); *Zeit* . . . (12).

The editor's statement that the articles in this book "constitute a general introduction to science" should not be taken seriously. The book is neither a general introduction to science nor an introduction to the general field of scientific reading. It should not be recommended for students of mathematics, economics, political science, geography, history, philosophy, botany, or zoology. It will prove useful to students of physics, astronomy, radio, aeronautics, chemistry, and biology.

F. H. REINSCH

University of California at Los Angeles

Freudvoll und Leidvoll. Short Stories by Rudolf Herzog. Edited by Jacob Hieble. (Henry Holt and Company, 1935. xv + 142 + lxiii. \$.96.)

This collection contains nine short stories taken from Herzog's *Komödien des Lebens und Jungbrunnen*. They are intended as reading material for intermediate classes in German, approximately for the third year of high school or the second year of college. The title *Freudvoll und Leidvoll* has been chosen, because all the stories treat love and *ewig Menschliches*. Each story is followed by notes, questions, a grammatical review, a list of idioms, and a translation exercise.

In perusing this little volume, one wonders why these stories were not introduced to American students a long time ago. Herzog's all-embracing optimism and sympathetic approach to life should find an echo in young hearts, and his lucid and easy-flowing style should make it easy for the student to acquaint himself with this author. The stories also present a regular lesson in German culture; they afford an excellent insight into German life with its inclination towards *Verinnerlichung* and its ever intimate association with the realm of music.

The value of the lists of idioms that are given without the English might have been increased through references to the line in the text where they occur. Otherwise this text is very well edited.

GODFREY EHRLICH

University of California at Los Angeles

SPANISH

Cartilla Española. By José Robles. (F. S. Crofts, 1935. viii + 110 pp.)

Here is something really new in a Spanish reader for beginners—a "*Día y noche de Madrid*," a series of ultra-modern *cuadros de costumbres* written in a style simple enough to be intelligible to the first year student, yet lively enough to interest his tired instructor with the most amusing pictures on every other page tempting both to read on beyond the assigned lesson.

The sketches begin at seven o'clock in the morning with the opening of the market and end at four o'clock the next day when the *sereno* unlocks the door for the last belated homecomer. In between they offer a cross section of Madrid at work, at school, and at play, in the halls of the *Prado* and in the cabaret, at church and in the subway, at the barber's and at the bull-fight. And the reader is not forced to limit himself to the companionship of any one guide. He may listen in on the conversation of the intelligentsia at their *tertulia* or eavesdrop on the taxi-drivers as they wait for their fares to leave the night club.

So the language he hears is sure to stand him in good stead when he travels no matter whose company he may be in. The vocabulary is as practical as any phrase book and far more intelligently arranged.

The teacher who uses the book should be warned that here he will be met with the temptation to fill in the gaps in the sketches with stories of *When I was in Spain*. . . . It is the sort of writing that starts off a string of reminiscences. But whether he yields to the temptation or not he is sure to enjoy himself when reads the *Cartilla Española* with his classes.

E. HERMAN HESPELT

New York University

Quinito, Explorador del Mundo. By Lawrence A. Wilkins. (Henry Holt and Company, 1935. xi + 323 + xxx pp. \$2.00.)

Quinito is the story of the adventures of two Spanish boys who travel throughout Spain, accompanied by their dog and their donkey. In the composition of the material which is of great simplicity yet of absorbing interest, Mr. Wilkins has shown admirable ingenuity. The story contains 917 Spanish words, nearly all of which are of high frequency. There is no doubt that this reader, with its simple, lively, idiomatic Spanish, will appeal greatly to our young students in junior and senior high schools, for which the book has been written. The travels of *Quinito* give the author an opportunity to include many an instructive chapter on subjects dealing with Spanish history, geography, customs, legends, games (football included), etc.

There are 35 chapters in the story, each accompanied by a vocabulary. This part of the book covers 129 pages. The second part is composed of 35 exercises corresponding to the reading lessons. These exercises are divided into *Reading Exercises* (pronunciation, dictation, conversation) and *Grammar Exercises*. The advantage of this division is apparent. The book may be used merely

as a reading text suitable to the accomplishment of the reading objective, in which the *Reading Exercises* may be used for testing comprehension and building vocabulary; or it may be used to teach grammar in connection with the reading, in which case the *Grammar Exercises* will prove valuable.

The usefulness of this book is increased by the addition of several Appendixes on Spanish pronunciation, Christian names, numbers, personal pronouns, verbs, and phrases for use in the classroom. The vocabulary is complete and well done.

H. CORBATÓ

University of California at Los Angeles

MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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